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ABSTRACT

The extension of the school's role in early education/care is considered here in terms of children ranging from four to eight years of age. The report reviews the historical and philosophical roots of current early childhood practice and the effects of and needs for early childhood programs. In the presence of current financial constraints on education, it has become necessary for early childhood programs to demonstrate positive effects in order to justify any extension of their services. Most research is inconclusive, but there is evidence that certain kinds of programs produce at least short term cognitive gains for both advantaged and disadvantaged children. A review of available research and data leads the author to recommend that schools establish a full day kindergarten program for five year olds, provide supplemental day care for out of school hours, and offer advice and assistance to parents of preschool children. The author cautions that current knowledge may be insufficient to warrant sweeping change and suggests that declining enrollment may provide an opportunity for limited action and needed research in the field. (Author/WD)

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EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

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The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

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COMMISSION ON DECLINING SCHOOL ENROLMENTS IN ONTARIO (CODE)

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INTRODUCTION

"...the strong commitment by many educators to early childhood education has for many years been based on the belief that children will be more likely to realize their potential with such educational experience than without it."

Ellis D. Evans in Contemporary Influences in Early Childhood Education (p. 34)

There is much evidence that early childhood education has experienced a renaissance since the early 1960's. In fact, the 1970's have seen an increasing demand for "outside of the home" care/education* for young children from infancy through the preschool years. Among the factors contributing to this demand are the number of mothers (the traditional care givers) in the work force and the belief that early education programs can contribute to the child's development. This report discusses current early care/education demands and needs in the context of declining enrollments in Ontario schools. Specifically, the report examines the feasibility and desirability of extending the school's responsibility in the area of early childhood education and care. Questions to be explored include the extent to which the conditions that are existing in schools as a result of declining enrollments can/should be considered as accommodating certain early care education needs in the provinces. Because the responsibilities of the Faculties of Education and the Ministry of Education are also affected by declining enrollments, the role of these agencies in any extension of the schools' early childhood program will also be discussed.

It is probably useful, at this point, to describe, briefly, what are considered to be the early childhood years and to identify present care/

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*The concepts of "care" and "education" in early education will be elaborated in Section I.

education provisions for these years. As defined by the Encyclopedia of Education, the age range for early childhood education is from 2 or 3 to 8 years.[1] Historically, early childhood care/education programs have been concerned with children in this age group, although the past few years have witnessed growing interest in so-called infant "stimulation" programs. Of course, the early care/education of many children was, traditionally, and continues to be supervised in the home by parents. Some parents may enlist the aid of older siblings, relatives, or a baby sitter in the task of "looking after" the child. However, in these instances, it is the parents who bear the major responsibility for, and determine the priorities related to, the care and education of their children until the children reach school age. For many other children, however, all or some of the years between birth and entry to school at age 5 or 6 are spent in organized care/education programs outside of the home. The time spent outside of the home ranges from 2½ hours a day (half day nursery or day care) to 8 hours a day (full day day care). Further there is evidence that this trend toward institutionalized (i.e., outside of the home) care/education is increasing.*

The kind of program in which a child finds himself at a given time depends upon a number of factors, e.g., age, program options available, financial resources of the parents and the like. However, the younger child (0-3 years) is likely to be enrolled in a program which has, of necessity, a largely custodial function. Some programs and services for infants and toddlers are, in fact, criticized for providing only the essential, minimum custodial care. As a rule, most programs for this age group do not have

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*Evidence is presented/discussed in Section III.

provisions for specific educational experience/activities. However some programs are defended as being of eventual educational value, although present emphasis is on general nurturance of the child. An older child (3-5 years) is likely to be enrolled in one of two kinds of programs. One program is developed around the "nurturance" model, as tends to be the case with the traditional nursery school. The second kind of program is one with a defined "educational" emphasis similar to that found in early intervention programs for economically disadvantaged children and, to a degree, in some kindergarten programs. To some extent, the program emphasis, nurturance or education, seems to correlate with age.

In this report, the extension/elaboration of the school's role in early education/care will be considered, for the most part, in terms of children in the 4-8 age group. Although some consideration will be given to the needs of younger children (0-3 years) and their parents, the principal concern is with the age range approximating possible entry to school (Junior Kindergarten) through the primary grades. Because the kind of program that could be provided by schools is central to any recommendations for extending their involvement in early care/education, Section I of this report reviews the historical and philosophical roots of current early childhood practice. Over the years different views have emerged concerning the kinds of care/education appropriate for young children. These differing views explain much of the current controversy regarding the "what" and "how" of practice. Thus any proposals for extending the school's role in early childhood practice cannot ignore the issues identified and discussed in Section I.

For those responsible for any decision to extend the school's responsibility for early care/education, perhaps the most critical issue relates to what educational researchers identify as the "effects" of early childhood programs. In other words, concern is with evidence that such programs do contribute to the child's development and learning. Section II of this report addresses this question of "effects". The early childhood years and the programs

designed for preschoolers have been the focus of much educational research in the past 20 years . What these findings suggest for any extension/elaboration of the school involvement in early care/education is discussed in Section II.

Any suggestions relative to increasing the school's role in early childhood services/programs must address the questions of "need". Section III of this report discusses the need for early care/education as this need is reflected in the demand for services available, and any proposed or desired change in services . Certainly enrollment figures associated with day care, nursery and kindergarten programs indicate one level of need. However, equally important is the need associated with quality of program, e.g., a program may not be adequate for the needs of the child. In Section III, both indices of need are presented and discussed. With respect to any changes in program and services have school personnel given any thought to extending their responsibilities in early childhood education/care? How do they react to different proposals related to such an extension of responsibilities, and what do they see as major obstacles to extending present programs/services? Data gathered in a questionnaire (Appendix A) to which eighty-nine school boards responded provide some answers to these questions. These and other related questions are also discussed in Section III of this report.

Finally, Section IV of the report presents the recommendations to be considered for inclusion in the brief of the Curriculum Task Force. As will be evident, some of these recommendations are not original since identical or similar ones have appeared in recent newspaper articles. However it is believed that Sections I, II, and III of this report provide a rationale and argument for each recommendation in Section IV - features sometimes

missing from the recommendations (appearing in the press) that have been made by others.

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Section I

Historical and Philosophical Roots of Early Childhood Practice

Philosophical orientations and issues

Of all the influences on early childhood education over the years, perhaps none has been more potent than the belief in the natural, inherent goodness of the child. This belief, born in the 18th century, represented a break with a long established notion that the child, as well as the adult, was inherently sinful. Because of this belief in the inherent goodness of the child, the development of early childhood education has, as Braun and Edwards discuss, a link with a tradition of thought associated with Rousseau.[1] The notion of nurturing the natural goodness of the child, of protecting him, of caring for him was certainly the credo of Johann Pestalozzi (1746-1827) who is credited, frequently, as representing the beginning of concern for early education. It is likely that Pestalozzi's response to children's needs was influenced by the characteristics of his young clientele who were the poor, beggar and orphaned children of the rural Switzerland of his day.[2] Although his educational "method" included attention to developing skills important to life in the rural society (e.g., spinning, weaving), the heart of his "method" seemed to be guided by the belief that children needed to be cared for and protected as well as taught.[3] Interestingly, a somewhat similar belief is held today, especially among those who suggest that young children need to be "protected" from programs or teachers that place emphasis on the acquisition of specific learnings and skills. Frequently, it is suggested that such exposure is in some way harmful or damaging to children, although little hard evidence is produced to support this claim. Nevertheless, the question of what content or activities are appropriate in the early years remains an issue.

Although Pestalozzi is associated with the beginning of concern for early

education, Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852) is associated with early education as a planned and organized part of the school system. He began his German Kindergarten in 1840 and, through the years, has been considered an important figure in both nursery and kindergarten education. Current practices in nurseries and kindergartens reveal certain Froebelian influences, although there is much modification of the original purposes and practices. Froebel continued in the Rousseau-Pestalozzi tradition of concern and respect for the child's natural interests and tendencies. However, he believed also that an educational program should strike a balance between the child's freedom to be himself and the obligations of society.[4] In other words, Froebel believed that education must assist the child in developing the knowledge, skills, and values needed for a productive life in society. To this end, his curriculum reflected a step by step approach to developing specific learnings. Materials were to be used in prescribed ways to achieve specific outcomes, and, as some have argued, even "play" in Froebel's kindergarten was directed and patterned, leaving little room for so called "spontaneous" or "creative" play.[5] However the kinds of materials (e.g., the "gifts") and activities (e.g., "occupations", "mother's plays") developed continue to serve as prototypes for materials and activities in most early education programs. Further, as Seidel's biography of Froebel (excerpted in Braun and Edwards) points out, Froebel, more than anyone before him, achieved the conceptualization of an educational program concerned with promoting the "harmonious development of body, mind, and heart."[6] Although for Froebel, the notion of this harmonious tripartite development seemed to be influenced by a mystical religious philosophy, it suggests concern with what was to become, later, the "whole child" concept.

Regardless of the extent to which Froebel's philosophy and practice are

used to justify different aspects of current practice, it should be recognized that in purpose and method, he probably stands closest to those who support a defined educational component in programs for children of 4 and 5 years. Froebel's kindergarten has been called a child of the Industrial Revolution because it is possible to see how his program reflected concern for preparing children to live and work in the new industrialized society. Thus it appears that Froebel saw early education as being responsible for some of society's "obligations" as these obligations reflected the social/economic needs of the time. To some extent, this position relates to a long standing issue in early education. The question here is the extent to which early education experiences, especially nursery and kindergarten experiences, should be a preparation for later schooling rather than ends in themselves. Some of the strongest (and loudest) arguments against housing programs for 3 and 4 years in schools are based on the belief that such programs would emphasize academic learning to the detriment of other worthwhile objectives. It is argued further that public schools lack the flexibility to develop early childhood programs which involve parents and certain community resources and agencies.[7] Such involvement is seen as important in early education programs. In general, the focus of concern seems to be that early childhood programs housed in schools will place too many academic expectations on children.

This point of view may explain, in part, why the philosophy and method of Maria Montessori (1870-1952) were never accepted widely in North America. Although Montessori schools (which adhere strictly to Dr. Montessori's philosophy and method) have been established in both Canada and the United States, the Montessori influence on early education practice has been limited. Given that the method and the famous Children's Houses (casa die bambini)

were developed in response to the needs of poor children in Rome, it is paradoxical that Montessori schools in North America tend to enroll children of the more affluent. A renewed interest in Montessori's method and materials emerged, however, in the early 1960's when the problems of the so-called disadvantaged children began to receive so much attention. Some compensatory education programs for these children attempted to implement Montessori's method and materials, or adaptation of both. What Montessori advocated was, briefly, the "prepared environment" in which the child's activity was goal directed. In addition to learning to care for himself and the property in the classroom or school, the child was to develop (through carefully planned and sequenced materials/activities) readiness for later learning. The sand letters for developing reading and writing skills are among the most famous of the Montessori materials and illustrate her dedication to sense training as critical in learning.[8] Any manipulation or play with the materials in the Montessori setting is goal directed. Therefore great care was taken in developing materials that would be "self correcting." (e.g., there is only one way in which the pink tower or brown stair can be assembled) As was true to some extent in Froebel's kindergarten, Montessori's program had no time or place for what is generally termed "free" or "imaginative play." This lack of unstructured play activity is explained by Montessori's philosophy of education, and by what she believed to be the needs of the children in her slum school. She was also influenced by her early work with retarded children. As Evans points out. Montessori's work was derived from a philosophy which saw "hope for the world" through education that was based on "fundamental values such as cooperation, self control, order, responsibility, patience

and the common good."[9] These beliefs can be seen as guiding the development of her method. Further she believed that the most important relationship in the classroom was between the child and the materials. Accordingly she did not encourage the development of an "emotional bond" between a child and his teacher.[10] Such beliefs have been attacked by Montessori's critics with perhaps the most criticism levelled at what is considered to be the prescriptive nature of the method/materials and the emphasis on academic learning. In Montessori's view, 4 and 5 year old children want to learn to read and write when they know that they can.[11] Such a position obviously puts Montessori in conflict with those who believe that early emphasis on the academic is restricting to the child and/or of no possible immediate or future value to him. Montessori's method and materials and her concept of teacher role address, in detail, the "what" and "how" questions of preschool education. Both questions spark debate among early childhood educators who hold differing beliefs concerning the extent to which preschool programs should make a deliberative attempt to promote academic learning.

While Montessori was engaged in establishing her Children's Houses, the McMillan* sisters were establishing open air nurseries for poor children in England. Although contemporaries, the McMillans and Montessori held different views of what was needed by their young clientele. Margaret and Rachel McMillan saw nursery education as both "preventative" and "nuturing."[12] The concern with preventing physical and mental problems, with nuturing the child, resulted in a program in which children learned to care for themselves and for

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*Alternate spelling "Macmillan" also found in the literature

objects (e.g., plants) and animals in the nursery. Although the McMillan program included activities "leading to reading and writing as well as number work and science work," the program was weighted toward outdoor play, music, drawing, rhythm activities and the like.[13] When the concerns of the McMillans are contrasted with those of other early childhood educators, it can be seen that nursery education and kindergarten education developed from different roots. Spodek, for example, notes this difference and suggests that the nursery movement has not been embroiled in the theoretical conflict that has plagued kindergarten education.[14] For one thing he notes that in comparison to kindergarten education, nursery education has employed an eclectic approach capable of accommodating a broad range of concerns.[15] Some have characterized the traditional nursery approach as the "mental health" approach to early education. Further, because this approach became so popular in pre-school education, some kindergartens in North America have more of a McMillan than a Froebelian flavor. Of course, this concern for preventing problems, and protecting the child, is reminiscent also of Pestalozzi. The current notion of "protecting" children is often put forward in terms of protecting children from the assumed pressure of an academically oriented program. Pines' use of the term "pressure cooker"[16] to describe academically oriented programs gave some early childhood educators a rallying cry. On the other side of the fence are those who claim that, contrary to the "pressure cooker" image, the academically oriented program is/can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for children.

Current practice orientations and issues

An historical examination of early childhood education programs/practices,

and the philosophy guiding them, reveals that most notions of what should be provided for young children reflect some conception of how children learn. Interestingly, the glimmerings of what Evans describes as the product-oriented versus the process-oriented debate in the current literature can be seen in the differing orientations of the "earliest" early childhood educators.[19] Interesting as well is the Pestalozzi, Montessori, and McMillan concern with what we now call the "disadvantaged." However in the past fifty years, the lines of the process-product debate have been more sharply drawn as developmental psychologists, as well as educators, have become engaged in defending different approaches to early education. Thus much of the current debate is carried forward by recourse to views of child learning and development. (Sullivan[18] provides an excellent historical treatment of the emergence of these competing points of view.) As Evans notes, the two major orientations revolve around the (1) "naturalistic, indigenous growth" theories and (2) those of "cultural competence" or "environmental determinism".[19] Educators of the "natural growth" persuasion tend to advocate the enrichment approach to early education. Those of the "cultural competence" view advocate what Elkind describes as the instruction approach.[20] In practice, enrichment and instruction suggest the emphasis in, rather than the totality of, program. The enrichment approach emphasizes opportunities for the child to engage in self expression, to be creative, and to direct much of his own learning. This does not mean that the young child is left to his own devices without any guidance by the teacher. However the teacher's instructional role is curtailed in the enrichment setting. The instruction approach, on the other hand, emphasizes opportunities for skill development, particularly skills which are thought to develop readiness

for later school learning. In this setting, the teacher's instructional role is valued. It is worthwhile repeating that these two different views or orientations are, in Evans words, ". . . more a matter of degree than a dichotomy."[21] However, as he notes, ". . . these views are the basis of many issues which pervade early childhood education, including the degree to which specific content and teaching techniques are stressed."[22] Stated in different terms, these differing views can be seen as having implications for the "what" and "how" of curriculum decisions in early education. It should be noted that these different viewpoints come into greatest conflict over the orientation of programs for 4 and 5 year olds. As a rule, there is less disagreement over programs for 3 year olds and younger, although the question of planned early stimulation for infants and toddlers is a controversial one.

In addition to the enrichment/instruction distinction, some suggest that an early childhood program can be distinguished by its care or education function. As mentioned earlier, programs for children below 4 and operated by individuals or agencies other than the school have been viewed, traditionally, as having a caring function, primarily. This orientation is undoubtedly influenced by what has been, in fact, the custodial function of day care designed to care for the child when the mother could not. (e.g., working mother) On the other hand, school kindergarten programs have been seen, traditionally, as having an educating function regardless of the specific program orientation (i.e., enrichment or instruction). In 1978, it is likely that day care programs for a significant number of children - especially those 3 years old and younger - perform a custodial function, for the most part. However as Almy suggests, the

kind of care that the child receives is likely to have implications for learning and later educational experiences.[23] Similarly, others will argue that the needs of young children make it impossible to completely ignore the caring function in programs presumed to have an educating function. Thus it can be argued that early childhood programs have consequences for both the care and the education of young children, with the age/needs of the child, the program setting (e.g., adult child ratio, facilities/resources) and orientation of staff determining which function receives priority. Interestingly, the definition of "day nursery" found in Ontario's Day Nursery Act is being revised so that the word "education", as well as the word "care", appears in the definition.*

Implications for extending school's role in early care/education

Taken together, the history of practice, the process-product debate, and the questions relating to care/education functions can be seen as addressing the overriding issue of what the purpose of early childhood programs should be. Careful study of this issue suggests that there is no one purpose which satisfies all needs of all young children. Further certain important purposes are better served by the instruction orientation to early education; others are better served by the enrichment orientation. Of all the agencies involved in early care/education, the school is in the best position to provide program components of both orientations in order to meet the needs of children in the 4-8 group.

Schools are certainly in the best position to provide program components which have an instruction orientation and deal with content related to later

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*Communication with Day Nurseries Branch, Ministry of Community and Social Services, March 30, 1978.

school learning. This is because of a tradition of school practice derived from a belief that schools and teachers have a responsibility for intervening in learning, i.e., taking definite steps to influence learning. This tradition reflects the belief that education can change/improve students' lives through a plan or program of intervention. [24 & 25] Unfortunately the concepts of intervention, as the concepts of structure and instruction, have been interpreted by some as promoting only the most rigid and authoritarian type of educational setting . . . hence the objection to housing early childhood programs in schools. However one needs only to turn to the British Infant and Primary school movement to observe that teacher intervention and instruction need not result in a stifling program for children. Observations in British schools and conversations with British teachers* reveal not only a supportive environment for children, but also concern with goal directed activity and teacher, as well as child, purposes. It is unfortunate that some attempts to emulate the British experience on this continent have given such a low priority to goal directed activity and teacher instructional role. Nevertheless in the British experience and in the tradition of school practice, there is support for the school's potential for developing early childhood program components which address needs associated with later school learning.

It can be argued that the program emphasis in many present kindergartens is enrichment. Many primary grade programs also include provision for enrichment activities. Thus by virtue of orientation, as well as staff interests/qualification and other resources, schools appear to have the potential for

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*Observations of the writer during visit to England, May-June 1973.

extending/elaborating the enrichment component of current early childhood programs . . . for example, a half day program of enriched day care to supplement the half day Junior Kindergarten program. Many of the resources needed to provide enriched education/care for young children are already available in schools. (e.g., space, equipment, teachers with special competencies in the arts, Physical Education, etc.) Of course, some redeployment of staff and resources, and some retraining of teachers would be required in an elaboration of present enrichment offerings for young children.

It will be argued later in this report that there is a need in early education for the kind of instruction and enrichment program components just described. In this discussion, the need has been assumed, and it is argued that the school, of all social agencies, is in the best position to meet this need.

The history of early childhood practice reveals that the rationale for most practice has derived from someone's belief about children's needs, and an opinion or point of view about how these needs could/should be met. It is only in recent years that it has been possible to seek evidence concerning the effects of practice. The results of this search are presented and discussed in Section II.

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Section II

Effects of Early Care/Education Programs

Problems/Issues in Early Childhood Research

The 1960's saw psychologists, linguists, sociologists, and politicians, as well as educators, focusing attention on early childhood education. In the United States and some Western European countries (e.g., Belgium, The Netherlands) early education was linked with concern for the plight of the socially and economically disadvantaged. The term, "compensatory education", was used to describe the many programs attempting to provide disadvantaged 3 and 4 year olds with experiences leading to better "start" in school. It was hoped that the disadvantaged, through participation in preschool programs, would be on an educational footing similar to that of their more advantaged peers when it was time to enter the formal school program. Certainly this was the hope of Project Head Start, the monumental, government funded effort to bring compensatory education to thousands of youngsters in the United States.

Although Head Start was seen as a national effort to assist disadvantaged children, there was no one type of program operating in all Head Start Centers. Many different programs, representing different philosophies and points of view, were instituted. Some argue that the variety of program is one reason why it has been difficult to evaluate the overall effect of Head Start, and thus difficult to know if this highly funded government intervention paid dividends. Regardless of the difficulty in judging the "across the board" effort, Project Head Start produced a considerable amount of data on individual programs. In fact, the development and research carried forward by individual projects, under the aegis of Head Start, has produced an early childhood data bank unequaled elsewhere. Further, the direction of some of this research and development has implications which are not restricted to the needs/problems of the disadvantaged. Thus, this discussion makes use of the U.S. findings as well as the data from relevant Canadian research.

Questions concerning the effects of preschool* programs are likely to reflect the philosophy or orientation of the person asking the question. However the questions frequently asked relate to the effects of preschool experience on later school learning. These are the critical questions of compensatory education as the purpose of compensatory education is to provide what the child needs in order to experience success in school. Further, questions related to effects of preschool experience are central to any deliberation considering an extension of the school's program for younger children. Specifically, the major questions are:

1) Do preschool programs make any difference?

and

2) What kinds of programs make what kinds of differences?

In this context, "difference(s)", implies the attainment or development of specific attitudes, behaviours, knowledge, skills, etc., as a result of participation in a preschool program. With respect to success in school, for example, does the child with preschool experience have an advantage over the child who does not have this experience, and what attitudes, behaviours, knowledge, skills seem to be developed by a given program. Of course these global questions must be modified to seek answers concerning different effects for different children.

Not all early childhood educators are sympathetic with the desire to pinpoint preschool effects as they influence later learning. Some argue that the preschool experience can be justified as an end in itself. Nevertheless interest in pinpointing preschool effects is increasing and the past few years have seen many researchers involved in efforts to evaluate

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*In this section "preschool" will be used to designate the class of programs (day care, nursery, kindergarten) for children aged 0-6.

preschool programs. It must be remembered, however, that many of these efforts have been directed at evaluating programs designed to meet the needs of disadvantaged children. Thus care must be taken in not overgeneralizing these findings. Evans voices this caution and points to other problems associated with research in early education. In addition to the danger of overgeneralizing results, he notes problems with specifying evaluation criteria, selecting/developing accurate measures of criterion variables, and determining the extent to which effects or outcomes can be attributed to a given program.[1] Obviously these problem areas need to be recognized in evaluating and interpreting findings from any research in early education regardless of the children involved. (i.e., the disadvantaged or their more advantaged peers)

Evans identifies some additional, though related, problems associated with interpreting and applying findings from early childhood research. He notes that many evaluations of both kindergarten and nursery programs have involved broad comparisons of children along fairly global dimensions. For example, a comparison on the dimension, "social adjustment" may be made between children who attended kindergarten and those who did not. Further the discussion of findings may give little or no specific information about the experiences of children who attended the program OR about the behaviours indicating "social adjustment" or lack of it.[2]

Obviously such findings are of little value in either program planning or deliberations considering the desirability of establishing/extending preschool programs. However such findings provide insight regarding why meaningful and systematic evaluation has been so difficult in many preschool settings - especially those of the mental hygiene philosophy and enrichment

orientation. Where there is little goal directed activity and little or no identification of specific learning outcomes, it is difficult to evaluate a program in a systematic fashion. However, specification of intended learning outcomes does not get around the problem of broad comparisons of children. In fact, some will argue that the global comparisons characteristic of most early education research (e.g., nursery/non nursery, Head Start/non Head Start groups) has limited the value of most findings. The argument goes something like this: It is not enough to know that preschool programs produce effects until we know the different effects of different programs on different children. Many of the available findings do involve global comparisons only (e.g., experimentals and controls) with no attention to sub groups. Nevertheless such findings offer most of the evidence, to date, concerning program effects.

Preschool Programs/Research Findings

With respect to this evidence, there is widespread agreement that the findings on the effects of preschool education are, generally, inconclusive. Although there are reports of immediate or short term effects (e.g., IQ gain, achievement test gains), the literature reveals that such effects, in many instances, either have not persisted or have not been re-evaluated to determine the degree to which they have been sustained.[3, 4, 5] Some educators argue that regardless of the effects on later school learning, preschool programs can be justified on the basis of providing opportunity for the early identification of learning or social problems. However when social and economics constraints surround educational decision making, it is likely that any proposed extension/elaboration of early childhood programs will need to address the issue of effects, i.e., evidence that early

education has some positive effect on success in school.

This situation, plus the inconclusive nature of much early education research, points to the significance of a recent (October 1977) publication of U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.[6] This is a report of the Consortium on Developmental Continuity whose members were associated with fourteen experimental infant and preschool programs during the early and mid 1960's. In response to the criticism that Head Start and other early education efforts have had no lasting effects, the members of the Consortium collected follow up data on students originally enrolled in their experimental programs. Based on a second analysis of the original data and analyses of follow up data, the Consortium members claim that ". . . the findings in this report now leave no reasonable doubt that in the main, programs which had deliberate cognitive curricula had a significant long-term effect on school performance".[7] Before examining the evidence for this claim, it may be useful to consider some of the evidence pertaining to reported short term effects of other preschool programs (i.e., programs not represented in the Consortium). Since the criteria applied by the Consortium differs in some significant respects from those applied in many individual studies, it is important to be aware of these differences. It is important, also, to consider some comments on the Follow Through evaluation before looking at the Consortium report in detail. Given a recent (March 1978) statement of the Follow Through evaluation, these comments will be considered first.

Certainly the programs or "models" implemented through Project Follow Through can be placed under the rubric of early education. However the findings on Follow Through classes (and any criticism of these findings) have only limited bearing on the previously noted findings of the

Consortium on Developmental Continuity. It is possible, of course that children from the fourteen programs of the Consortium groups participated in some of the Follow Through programs. Thus it might be argued that the original Head Start effects influenced the Follow Through results, which in turn influenced the follow up study of Head Start children. However the point to be remembered is that the criteria of assessment, and probably a good portion of the sample, were different in both cases, making a direct comparison of findings impossible.

This understanding is important because of both the United States Office of Education report on the evaluation of Follow Through and the critique of this evaluation by House, Glass, McLean and Walker.[8] These critics attack the USOE report's claim that "a basic skills approach" is superior to other methods in teaching disadvantaged children. In fact, they state,

> No approach was demonstrated to be better than others. In addition, the differences between performance of Follow Through and non Follow Through students were small - well within the range attributable to artifacts of the study.[9]

These critics stake their claim on the basis of <u>their</u> analyses of the Follow Through data, pointing out what they consider to be measurement and analysis problems with the original analysis. However, House et al do believe that the major finding of the USOE report is valid - namely that the effectiveness of any model or teaching approach will vary from one school district to the next. Whether or not the House, Glass, McLean and Walker critique will itself be critiqued remains to be seen. However both the critique and the original analysis point up the concern for, and difficulty in, determining effects of preschool programs/approaches for young children.

As noted previously, much of the research related to program effects

deals, for the most part, with immediate or short term effects - especially with respect to cognitive gains. A number of experimental preschool programs can point to gain in IQ and/or readiness scores for children participating in the program. Some programs claim, as well, an improvement in self concept or attitude as measured by some standardized instrument. The findings reported by Baker in the report, "The Effectiveness of Nursery School on Affective and Conceptual Development of Disadvantaged and Non Disadvantaged Children" are typical.[10] The positive effects on conceptual development (readiness and achievement tests, measures of time - space-quantity and conservation tasks) and affective development (self concept test) are reported for both disadvantaged 4 year olds and their more advantaged peers. In terms of these results, children with the nursery experience out performed children who had not had this nursery experience. However, follow up evaluation into the second primary school year resulted in the conclusion that ". . . the successful experiences of the nursery school children are not being sustained".[11]

Not every study of an experimental program has been extended to determine the persistence of effects even into the primary grades. The Regan-Leithwood study is a case in point.[12] This study was concerned with evaluating the implementation of an experimental program in a number of kindergartens in Ontario. The kindergartens in the sample contained children from various socio-economic classes. Thus the pupil population was considered representative of the geographic region in which the study was conducted. The experimental program was concerned with developing specific primary thinking skills and was developed as a part of the kindergarten program rather than as a total program. The data gathered on pupil effects in June of the kindergarten year showed that, with respect to the program's objectives, children who received the program outperformed children from the same schools who had not received the program. The data

were obtained from responses to criterion referenced items which tested the objectives of the program. Although there was no systematic follow-up on any groups of children receiving the program, there is conflicting evidence concerning the persistence of effects even into grade 1. According to the researchers, "Many grade 1 teachers reported noticing differences in CSP (the experimental program) kindergarten graduates in comparison with other graduates."[13] The inference is that the difference favored the experimental children. However, the opinions of a sample of grade 1 teachers, collected in a formal questionnaire ". . . would seem to disconfirm the supposition that teachers of CSP graduates would perceive improved performance."[14]

What some believe to be the rather disappointing results of preschool programs, with respect to positive and long term effects, is sometimes explained in terms of "too little and too late." The argument here is that 3 or 4, and certainly 5, years of age is too late for educational intervention to have a lasting impact, especially on the problems of the disadvantaged child. This position reflects the thrust of Bloom's developmental studies which point to the years from birth to 4 as the period in which the development of intelligence can be most significantly influenced by environmental conditions, e.g., educational intervention.[15, 16] In other words, it is argued, age 3, 4 or 5 may simply be too late for intervention to have any lasting impact, particularly with respect to the development of language and intelligence.

As might be expected, these explanations of effects, or more properly lack of effects, of preschool programs began to focus attention on what might be done to intervene at still younger ages - e.g., infants and toddlers.

Discussions by Dusewicz and O'Connell[17] and Honig[18] describe the type of program developed widely for infants and toddlers, 0-3 years of age. As a rule, these programs are concerned with providing the material, toys, equipment and staff which promote/support the development of sensori-motor skills (e.g., prehension, imitation) and speech and language development. The adults in the setting are expected to assist and reinforce the 6 month or 2 year old in his "explorations." However children are allowed, within the bounds of safety, considerable freedom in selecting their own activities. Not all programs for infants and toddlers are "center based", i.e., housed in a facility outside the home. As described by Dusewicz and O'Connell in their research, infant-toddler programs can be "center based" "home based" or "parent based". Some infant-toddler projects may sponsor all three types of programs and/or a combination program (e.g., center based and parent based). As noted, the center based program is housed in a facility outside the home. The home based program often involves a trained adult visiting the home and working directly with the child. The parent based program, on the other hand, sees the parent working with the child in activities suggested or prescribed by the developers of the curriculum or an early childhood worker. Each program may work toward the same objectives. Dusewicz and O'Connell report that, in their study, both the center based and home based groups gained significantly in intellectual, language and social development during both the infant and toddler group programs. However, the gains of the center based group exceeded those of the home based group. It is reported further that when either of these programs was combined with a parent based program, the gains were negligible.[19] This latter finding contrasts with the findings and

beliefs of other researchers (e.g., The Consortium group) and thus is another example of the ambiguity which characterizes the research in the field.

Fowler's studies[20, 21] of Canadian infants between the ages of 3-30 months are interesting as both disadvantaged and advantaged children were enrolled in a program of "enriched day care." The "enriched" day care program appears similar to the programs described by Honig, and Dusewicz and O'Connell, although the skills, concepts and language competencies to be acquired in Fowler's program may be more specific. It is reported that during the first year of Fowler's program, the total sample of advantaged infants made significant mean gains on the Bayley Mental Scale. This progress is in contrast to that of the home reared controls who did not gain significantly. By the second year of the program, some of the disadvantaged children were beginning to show significant gains on the Bayley Scale and, like their advantaged peers, were displaying generally good social skills and relationships.[22]

A follow-up study of the children in this "enriched" program was carried forward during the 1 to 2 years after children had graduated from the program. In this study, the major finding was considered to be the impressive cognitive gains achieved across all groups of advantaged children. This was in contrast to the findings for the disadvantaged children whose IQ scores declined between the time of leaving the enriched program and the second follow-up testing.[23]

Such findings seem to point to questions concerning how and if the benefits of such programs can be sustained for certain children. Seemingly the parents and home of the advantaged child support (and perhaps, extend)

the kind of gains resulting from the enriched day care program. For what are a variety of social and economic factors, the parents and home of the less advantaged child do not seem to be able to support him in the same way. Although the disadvantaged children in Fowler's sample did not maintain their initial gains, it would be interesting to know if, in comparison to their disadvantaged peers not in the program, their school learning/progress is in any way different.

Any consideration of the effects of early schooling in the Canadian context cannot ignore the language immersion programs which are inaugurated in kindergarten. Such programs have been the object of research by the staff of the Modern Language Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Barik and Swain report on the evaluation of a French immersion program in a Toronto public school.[24] For children enrolled in this program, all instruction in kindergarten and grade 1 is in French. During the year of this evaluation (1974/75) all instruction in grade 2 was in French, and approximately two thirds of the instruction in grade 3 was in French. Tests of mental ability and achievement (standardized tests in English) as well as tests of comprehension of French, were administered to grade 1, 2, and 3 students. The results of the study lead the researchers to the following conclusions

1. There is no indication that participation in the immersion program has any detrimental effect on the cognitive ability of the children, as reflected in IQ score.

2. Pupils in the immersion program through grade 3 lag behind their peers in the regular English program in some aspects of English language skills measured, notably spelling, but show a considerable transfer of reading skills from French to English, even in the absence of any formal instruction in English.

3. Pupils in the immersion program master mathematical skills via French to the same extent as (or even better than) pupils in the regular program taught via English, and can apply these skills in one language context or the other. Furthermore, there is no indication that changing the mathematics curriculum from French to English (in Grade 3) creates any difficulties.

4. In measures of French proficiency (aural comprehension, achievement, reading) pupils in the Toronto immersion program perform as well as pupils in a similar program in Ottawa, who have the advantage of a bilingual environment.[25]

In addition to the specific implications for language teaching/learning, these results suggest that a challenge, such as beginning to learn a second language, is not overwhelming or detrimental to some kindergarten and primary grade children. Although the immersion program discussed by Barik and Swain cannot be considered an "experimental preschool program" per se, it does represent an attempt to intervene early in learning - in this case language learning.

Most studies dealing with the effects of experimental preschool programs have assessed and discussed results in terms of norm referenced or criterion referenced measures. The Consortium on Developmental Continuity study, identified earlier, departed somewhat from this methodology in assessing persistent effects of a group of experimental preschool programs. As noted in the Consortium report (published by DHEW, Washington D.C.) and as reported at a discussion of the findings (AERA Convention, Toronto 1978), interviews with children and parents, and school records are the major sources of data being considered in determining program effects.

This study, organized and supervised by Irving Lazar of Cornell University, is a collaborative effort of twelve research groups. Each group of researchers is/was associated with one or more experimental program (for disadvantaged children) inaugurated in the early or mid 1960's. As

stated in the Summary Report, "The low-income children who were enrolled in these programs now range from nine to eighteen years of age".[26] Originally, the programs involved were initiated and evaluated independently of each other. The collaborative effort among the research groups refers only to the collection of follow-up data during 1976-77. At that time, it was possible to gather follow-up data on 80%* of the total sample (i.e., combined groups from original dozen studies). These data as well as the original data were sent to a central office for further analysis and study by a single, independent group. However as noted in the Summary Report, several of the analyses presented are based on some, rather than all, fourteen of the original programs. Incomplete data collection at the time the report was written, and differences in sample selection are among the factors cited for these omissions. Nevertheless, the report states, "The findings are both too conservative in the methods of data analysis from which they emerge and too dramatic in their consistency and size, for the main effects they found to be spurious."[27]

Table 1 (excerpted from the Consortium Summary Report) identifies the studies and the principal investigators involved in the Consortium study. As noted in this table, some studies, and therefore programs, were center based, some were home based, and some were a combination of the two. Unlike the home based programs referred to earlier, where the home visitor worked with the child, those in this set of programs targeted on the parent, primarily. That is, the early childhood educator or home visitor trained the mother to use certain activities and verbal models with the child. Anyone

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*This percentage reported by Lazar at annual American Educational Research Association meeting, Toronto, March 1978.

Table 1: Summary of Studies*

PROGRAM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	LOCATION	TYPE OF DELIVERY SYSTEM	AGE AT INTERVENTION	YEARS OF PROGRAM
The Philadelphia Project	Dr. Kuno Beller	Philadelphia	center-based	4-6	early '60's
Institute for Developmental Studies	Dr's Martin & Cynthia Deutsch	Harlem	center-based	4-8	late '50's early '60's
The Parent Education Program	Dr. Ira Gordon	northern Florida	home-based	3 mo - 3	mid '60's
The Early Training Project	Dr. Susan Gray	Murfreesboro or Columbia, Tenn.	combination	4-5	early '60's
The Family-Oriented Home Visitor Program	Dr. Susan Gray	Nashville, Tenn.	home-based	0, 1	early '70's
Curriculum Comparison Study	Dr. Merle Karnes	Champaign - Urbana, Ill.	center-based	4	mid '60's
The Mother-Child Home Program	Dr. Phyllis Levenstein	Long Island	home-based	2-3	late '60's early '70's
Experimental Variation of Head Start Curricula	Dr. Louise Miller	Louisville, Ky.	center-based combination	4	mid 60's
Harlem Training Project	Dr. Frank Palmer	Harlem	center-based	2-3	mid 60's
Perry Preschool Project	Dr. David Weikart	Ypsilanti, Mich.	combination	3-4	early '60's
Curriculum Demonstration Project	Dr. David Weikart	Ypsilanti, Mich.	combination	4	mid 60's
Carnegie Infant Program	Dr. David Weikart	Ypsilanti, Mich.	home-based	3 mo - 2	late '60's
Micro-Social Learning System	Dr. Myron Woolman	Vineland, N.J.	center-based	4-5	late '60's
Head Start & Follow Through New Haven Study	Dr. Edward Zigler	New Haven, Conn.	center-based	5	mid '60's

*Summary Report: The Persistence of Preschool Effects, p. 4

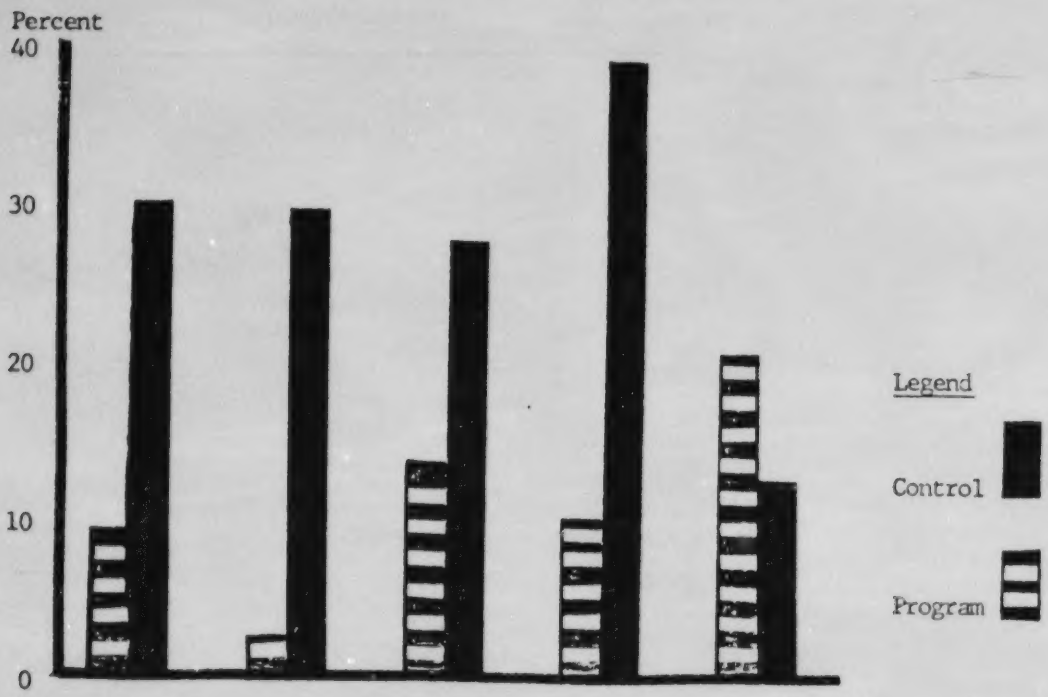
conversant with the early childhood field would recognize that the programs identified differ with respect to specific program concerns. Gray's programs, for example, demonstrated a focus on achievement motivation and achievement aptitudes, whereas the programs in Karnes' study reveal a concern with language development. Within the original Karnes study, five preschool programs were selected for comparison and, in spite of a common focus on language development, the approach to this development differs across programs. (e.g., The Bereiter-Englemann program, Karnes Ameliorative Program.) Regardless of the diversity across the programs represented by the consortium investigators, the Summary Report states:

> What their studies had in common, and what made them worthy of further analysis, was the care with which they were conducted. All were carefully planned from the start, with rigorous staff training, constant program supervision, periodic evaluation and at least some follow-up of the children involved. They had explicit and standard intervention programs, so that the content of the child's experience could be specified.[28] (emphasis that of this writer)

This last statement is an important one and will be discussed after a brief review of the Consortium findings.

The Consortium Summary Report states that the evidence collected indicates ". . that early education improves the academic performance of the low-income child."[29] Figures 1, 2, and 3, excerpted from the report, present the major findings of the study. Figures 1 and 2 are concerned with data from five programs and identify the percentage of program and control children subsequently placed in special classes (Figure 1), and what is termed the percentage reduction in children in special education classes. (Figure 2) "Percentage reduction" (a term used throughout the report) refers here to a reduction in the percentage of children who would be expected ordinarily to have eventual special class placement. As Figures 1 and 2 indicate, the

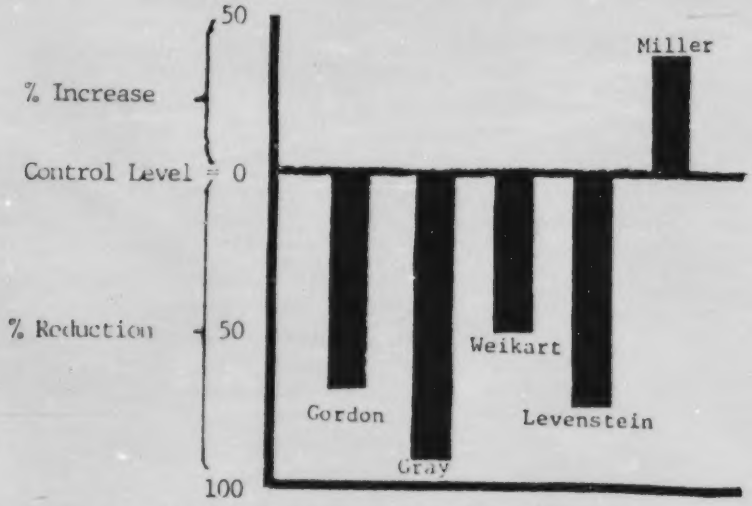
Figure 1: Percent of Program and Control Children in Special Education*



Totals	Gordon	Gray	*Weikart	Levenstein	Miller
Program Children	64	36	58	69	93
Control Children	20	17	65	23	16
Significance	.052	.017	.096	.004	.689

Pooled Significance Level p=<.0002 (two-tailed)

Figure 2: Percentage Reduction in Children in Special Education



*Summary Report: The Persistence of Preschool Effects, p. 14

Miller program was the exception to the finding that fewer experimental than control children were placed in special class. The report suggests that this exception may be due to "a nonexperimental procedure for creating a control group" resulting from "the fact that the project was primarily concerned with comparing different curricula rather than comparing program children with those who had not received any program." [30]

Figures 3 and 4 present findings from seven programs and indicate the percentage of program and control children held back a grade (Figure 3) and the percentage reduction of children held back a grade. (Figure 4) As revealed in these figures, the percentage of grade failures, with one exception, was greater for control than for program children. The report suggests that differences in promotion policies across different school districts may be one of the factors accounting for the finding that the percentage of control children retained in grade varies more among projects than does the percentage of controls placed in special class. It is suggested also that assignment to special class may involve more legal or standardized procedures that promotion decisions.

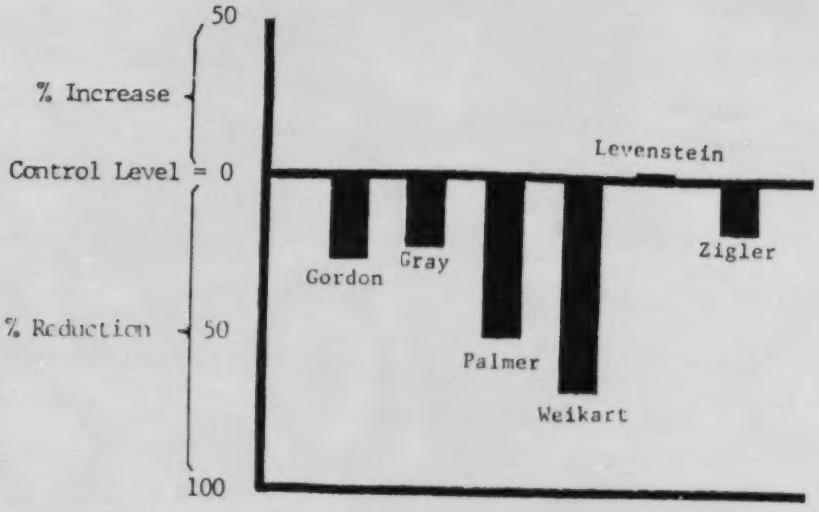
In addition to interviews and the inspection of school records, Wechsler Intelligence tests were administered as part of the follow-up study. Figure 5 presents some results pertaining to five programs and illustrates differences in mean IQ scores when program and control children are compared over time. As can be seen in Figure 5, the IQ differences between the program and control children decrease over time. However, in the light of these data, the report argues that although not producing a permanent effect on IQ scores, preschool programs produce an effect which is sustained to some degree during the primary school years when basic skills are taught.

Figure 3: Percent of Program and Control Children Held Back a Grade *

Totals	Gordon	Gray	Palmer	Weikart	Levenstein	Miller	Zigler
Program Children	70	33	131	58	68	105	79
Control Children	21	12	42	65	23	18	65
Significance	.920	.569	.001	.226	.984	.555	.570

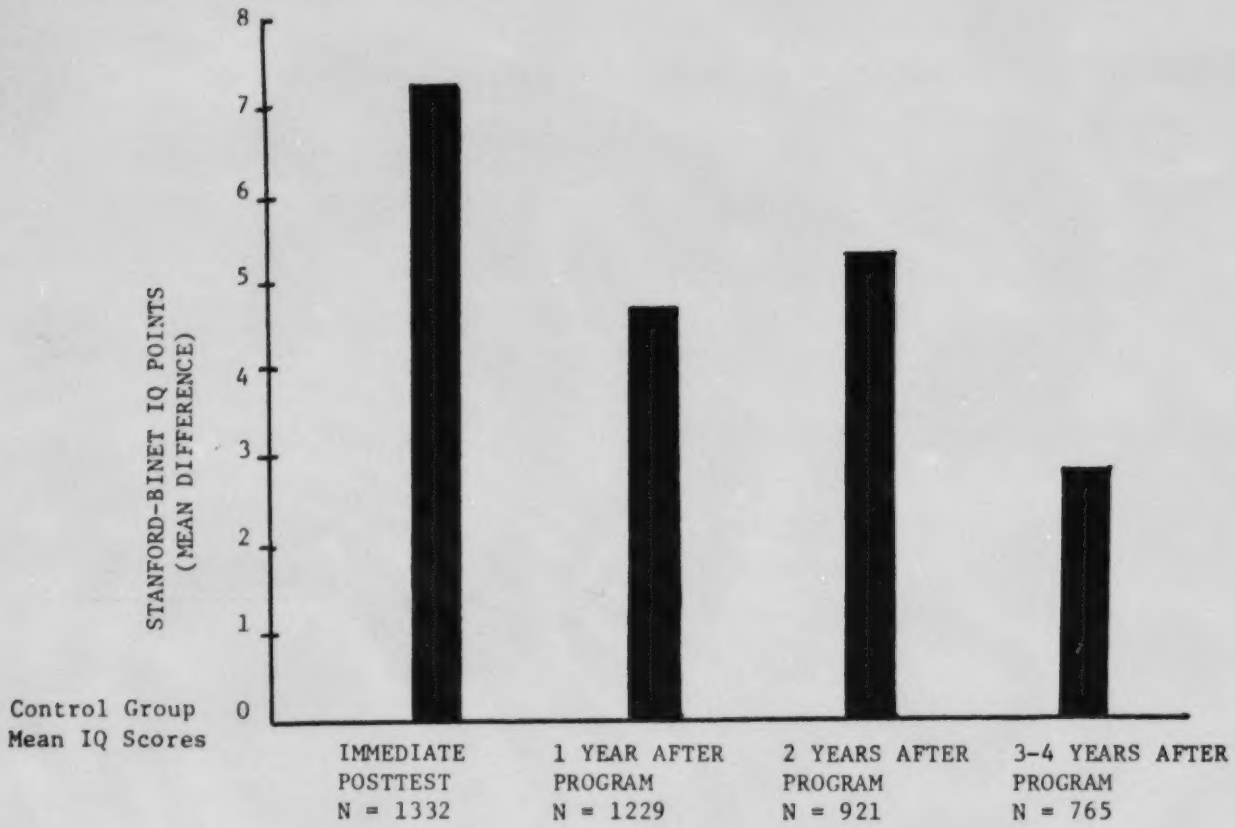
Pooled Significance Level p=<.048 (two-tailed)

Figure 4: Percentage Reduction in Children Held Back in Grade



* Summary Report: The Persistence of Preschool Effects, p. 16

Figure 5: Differences in Mean IQ Scores Comparing Program and Control over Time*



Pooled Significance Levels (two-tailed)*	$p < .0000$	$p < .0000$	$p < .0000$	$p < .0002$

PROJECTS INCLUDED by TIME PERIODS (N of SUBJECTS)

IMMEDIATE POSTTEST:	Beller	167	Gray ETP	87	Miller	244
	Deutsch	44	Levenstein	150	Palmer	280
	Gordon	196	Gray FOHV	43	Weikert Perry	121
1 YEAR AFTER PROGRAM:	Beller	163	Gray FOHV	51	Palmer	255
	Gordon	186	Levenstein	103	Weikart Carnegie	38
	Gray ETP	82	Miller	231	Weikart Perry	120
2 YEARS AFTER PROGRAM:	Beller	157	Gray FOHV	48	Miller	221
	Gordon	187	Levenstein	109	Weikart Perry	119
	Gray ETP	80				
3-4 YEARS AFTER PROGRAM:	Beller	149	Gray ETP	80	Weikart Carnegie	36
	Gordon	179	Miller	203	Weikart Perry	118

* When the results are pooled statistically, the differences between program and control children is highly significant at each posttest time period.

*Summary Report: The Persistence of Preschool Effects, p. 5

With respect to the interview data, preliminary analyses suggest fewer school dropouts among program children, and a somewhat better self rating of their school competence than is true of controls. As a rule, parents believed that the programs had been valuable for their children. Parents appeared particularly satisfied with "cognitive aspects" of programs.

As stated in the report, "Probably the most important finding is that low income children who receive early education are better able to meet the minimal requirements of their school." [31] Admittedly, the data analysis does not account for the extent to which the program versus parental interest/concern may have influenced affects, or for the countless variables intervening between program participation and the follow up study approximately 12 years later. Nevertheless the data on special class placement, grade retention and IQ are worthy of consideration by decision makers. These data appear to provide evidence of some lasting and meaningful effects of preschool education - at least for disadvantaged children. Certainly special class placement and grade retention are two recognized indicators of the fact that the child is not coping successfully with the school's academic program. Thus there is sufficient reason to suspect that "something" about the pre-school program experience of the children studied made them less likely than their controls to be retained in grade or placed in special class. Although children in the sample participated in different programs, a common denominator across programs was "a deliberate cognitive curricula." Thus a likely hypothesis is that early childhood programs which mount a deliberate and planned effort to intervene in cognitive development produce some long term effects, at least for the disadvantaged. Further, the data which show IQ gains being sustained to some extent through the primary years present a significant finding. Given current concern with the learning of basic skills,

it could be argued that preschool programs with a planned cognitive emphasis are justified if IQ gains persist only through the period when children are learning the tool or basic skills of reading and mathematics.

The Consortium Summary Report concludes that although there may be a "magic age" at which educational intervention is most effective, this "magic age" has yet to be determined. Admittedly, this report, as well as the findings of other researchers, leave many questions unanswered. As suggested by Gray* and others, it is difficult to get "good data" on attitudes and other affective effects of preschool programs. Thus more can be said about cognitive effects of early education than can be said about the effects on self concept, attitudes, motivation and the like. Similarly little is known about the variables, particularly school related variables, which are likely to contribute to the persistence or decline of the positive effects identified at the end of the "treatment." i.e. the preschool experience. For example, are there types of curricular programs for primary, junior and intermediate grades which would be superior to other types of programs in helping to maintain and extend the positive effects of a cognitively oriented preschool program?

Some Implications

Given research findings of the type reported in this review, it is impossible to suggest that this or that program is likely to produce short or long term effects of a specific kind for all children. Nevertheless there is evidence that certain kinds of programs experienced success in producing at least short term cognitive gains for both advantaged and disadvantaged children. In addition, the Consortium on Developmental Continuity study claims that cognitively oriented programs produce

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*Comments by Gray at annual American Educational Research Association meeting, Toronto, March 1978.

persisting effects, at least for disadvantaged children. Further it is claimed that the evidence of this long term effect is found in results which have very meaningful and practical consequences for children and school personnel (i.e., special class placement, grade retention) From a curriculum point of view, the research points to the effectiveness of planned curricula with specified objectives. The specific content or skill focus does not appear to be as critical as the fact that there is a specific focus and a deliberate attempt to achieve specified objectives.

What do these findings imply for any elaboration or extension of the schools involvement in preschool education? Perhaps the most pronounced implication relates to the curriculum development and planning required for any justification of claims that increased school involvement in preschool education will have a positive effect on later school learning. In addition to implications for the school's role in preschool education, some findings have implications for the role of the larger educational community in early care/education. Faculties of education, for example, certainly would have a role to play in assisting schools in the development of curriculum programs appropriate to the objectives of expanded preschool programs. These faculties and certain professional organizations might also consider ways of providing "parent education" based on the findings and experiences of those who have been involved in infant and toddler care and education.

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SECTION III

Day Care and Kindergarten Practice in Ontario

"Day care" for young children refers to care given ". . . to children away from their homes for all or part of the day."[1] However, as noted in a recent publication of the Ontario Economic Council, "there is no specific good called 'day care' but a whole range of care from minimal custodial care up to expensive individualized care."[2] Forms of day care services in Ontario are generally categorized as "full-day" or "half-day". Full-day day care centres include: public day care, private day care, commercial centres, parent cooperatives, student union centres and residential centres. The licensing of these centres is regulated by the province and public subsidies support many of the children enrolled in these centres.

Although the Ministry of Community and Social Services-Day Nurseries Branch was unable to provide an up to date figure on the number of children receiving subsidy currently, 1974 figures show that, during that year, almost half of the children in full-day programs received subsidy.[3] Proprietary and cooperative nursery schools provide most of the half-day care available. Few subsidies are granted for half-day programs which reportedly, "cater to a middle class clientele."[4] In addition to these full-day and half-day services, subsidized private-home day care (also referred to as family day care) is available for some children. This day care is provided in private homes (i.e., residences) and, when subsidized, it must meet certain provincial standards and regulations. (e.g., the number of children and the age of children that can be cared for in a private residence are regulated The growth of supervised and regulated private-home day care is attributed to a demand for day care that has outweighed the available space in group day care centres. However, there are those who believe that private-home

day care is more suitable than centre care for infants (0 - 2½ years) and for children with certain physical or behavior problems.[5] It should be noted that the province also funds day care and other services for the mentally and physically handicapped. There are also centres that provide help for the disturbed child and his parents. Of course it must be remembered that some parents, either by choice or necessity (i.e., not eligible for subsidy or cannot find a place for child in centre), make private child care arrangements which are not a part of the provincial program.

Although a variety of day care services seem to be available in Ontario, it is estimated that only a small fraction of the children of working parents have day care services available to them.[6] Articles in daily newspapers* attest to the problems experienced by some parents in finding adequate day care for their children, and to the continuing demand for more day care services. This demand for an increase in day care services continues in spite of the fact that these services have increased dramatically since the mid 1960's. Some argue that this increase in service, and the big boom in day care, started with the passing of the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) in which the provinces' day care expenditures were to be shared by the federal government.[7] However, others argue that the factors contributing to the demand for more day care are: 1) increasing industrialization which has brought more women into the work force and 2) belief that the early years are critical to learning and, therefore, that preschool programs have value.[8] In any case, the increase in day care services has not been without its problems. In addition to the problem of providing quality day care for all who seek it, there is also the problem of convincing the public of the need to support day care

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*For example, The Globe and Mail, November 10, 1977

services. As Clifford observes, some entrenched beliefs concerning the mother's traditional role as care giver work against total acceptance of day care as an integral part of community services.[9] On the other hand, recommendations concerning preschool education such as those found in the Hall-Dennis Report[10] suggest a growing public commitment to the care and education of young children. Among these recommendations are that public schools include more provisions for preschool education (e.g., nurseries), and that schools and community day care agencies work together in the cooperative manner that would result in quality child care services for more children[11].

National figures for 1976 indicated that a high percentage of children in the 3-5 year age range were enrolled in day care. For children of working mothers, the following percentages, by age, represent day care enrollments in Canada in 1976.[12]

Infants (below 3 years)	4.30%
Children (3-5 years)	18.38%
Children (over 6 years, below 15 years)	0.4%

It is not surprising to find the highest percentage of children in the 3-5 year age range. Often, working mothers will wait until their children are 2½ - 3 years before returning to the work force. However, there are some indications that demands for infant-toddler care (0-3 years) are growing. It is interesting to note, in the national figures, the inclusion of the day care category for children over 6 years but under 15 years. Although not everyone may think of day care as pertaining to school age children - particularly those in the junior and intermediate grades - there is growing recognition that many school children need some kind of care/ supervision for the hours when they are not involved in the formal school program and when parents are working. As will be seen later in this discussion, this need has particular relevance to any consideration of

extending the school's programs/services for young children.

In Ontario, the regulation and supervision of provincial day care programs/services is the responsibility of The Day Nurseries Branch, Ministry of Community and Social Services. Guidelines and regulations pertaining to these programs/services are found in The Day Nurseries Act and Regulations. Provincial figures for 1978* present a picture of the growing demand for day care services and the attempts to meet these demands. As of March 1978, the number of full-day day care centres in the province was 613, compared with 301 in 1973. Further, since 1973, there has been a growth in what are called "integrated" centres in which both handicapped and nonhandicapped children are enrolled. As of March 1978, these full-day centres had an enrollment of 27,231 compared with a 1973 enrollment figure of 11,076. As these figures reveal, the number of children enrolled in full-day care more than doubled in a five year period. The March 1978 figure for children attending helf-day in a day care centre or nursery school is 27,229. All of these enrollment figures include infants and toddlers (0-3 years) as well as children in the 3-5 year age range.

Less information is available concerning the specific program of care/education provided for these children. (As noted previously, the definition of "day nursery" found in the Day Nurseries Act is being revised to include the word, "education".) According to information received from the Day Nurseries Branch, The Day Nurseries Act and Regulation are being revised to include specific recommendation for minimum daily program requirements. However, at this time, the only program requirements are those listed under "Daily Procedures" in the Regulations. The "Procedures" are concerned with making sure that certain standards/conditions relating to rest, outdoor play, indoor play and general supervision are met. Given the lack of

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*These figures and other specific information on day care in Ontario (not documented by reference to another source) provided in a letter from Mrs. E. Etchen, Director, Day Nurseries Branch, Ministry of Community and Social Services. March 30, 1978.

more specific program criteria and the numbers of individuals/groups operating day care centres and nurseries, it is not surprising that the kind of service provided varies. This variation is found, in particular, with respect to what can be called "educating" functions and activities. As noted earlier, it is difficult to completely separate care and education functions. However different programs seem to emphasize one function or the other, while a few programs seek to combine the two.

Some programs in some centres and nursery schools - especially those catering to middle class children - show concern for providing educationally oriented activities/experiences as well as custodial care (e.g., Montessori type nurseries, some parent cooperative centres). Other programs are more oriented to the custodial function (e.g., rest, supervised play, meals). The Toronto program of the Canadian Mothercraft society is one which attempts to balance the care/education functions and, interestingly, to do this in a program for infants and toddlers. The children referred to in Fowler's studies (Section II) were enrolled in the Toronto Mothercraft program. By way of review, the middle class children in these studies achieved, and sustained for some months, substantial gains in I.Q. A visitor to the program* observes a variety of materials, experiences, and child-adult interactions being used to stimulate and reinforce children as they go about their day. The infants can be observed crawling around a room containing objects of different sizes, colours, shapes, textures, etc. or sitting with 6 month old peers, and the teachers**, having a snack or playing with water. The verbalizing of the teachers is frequent, appears purposeful, but does not have the effect of bombarding the children with words.

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*The writer observed the Mothercraft program and talked with the program Director.

**Many are students in the Mothercraft training program.

(e.g., one hears appropriate naming of objects, appropriate praise of children, etc.). The toddlers can be observed at play with different materials and equipment (e.g., paints, clay, apparatus for climbing, seeds, soil, etc.). For these "older" children, a balance between independent and group activity can be seen. Again, the teachers stimulate and reinforce the children and, at this age, begin to encourage meaningful verbalization by the child. At lunch, for example, the teachers describe the food (e.g., noting that the carrots are round and orange) and encourage children to observe and comment when something is being put on their plates. The visitor may be surprised to observe 2-2½ year olds coping so well with forks in feeding themselves. This, children are encouraged though not compelled to do. The program at Mothercraft and the kind of adult-child and child-child interactions taking place suggest a goal oriented approach to early care and education. That is, the staff appear to work toward the achievement of specific goals or outcomes. That this approach can be implemented without rigid programming and adult domination of the environment is demonstrated by the Mothercraft program.

Admittedly, in terms of both numbers and training, Mothercraft has the staff to develop and maintain such a program. In addition to the Director, the program is staffed by students who are enrolled in a three semester program to train them "to work with infants and toddlers in a group setting." An Ontario Grade XII education, or its equivalent, is required for entry into the training which includes formal classes/study (e.g., child development) as well as practical training. Mothercraft graduates are employed in many different day care centres.

With respect to staff qualifications and experience, not all day care centres are as fortunate as the Mothercraft infant-toddler program. According to the Day Nurseries Act, the director/supervisor of a day care

centre, operating under the act, must have a minimum of two years post secondary training in child development, or its equivalent, with considerable practical experience appropriate to the age of the children to be supervised, both during teacher training and after graduation. Reportedly, many directors have Advanced Certification with university degrees in appropriate courses. However, the qualifications for staff, other than the director, are not spelled out precisely. Although the Regulations state that the staff to be employed should have specialized "knowledge and experience in the methods of child guidance for the ages of the children supervised," this criteria is too broad/vague to indicate the level of skill/knowledge demanded. At the present time there are two year diploma courses in early childhood education offered within the community colleges throughout the province, and six universities offer four year degree programs with specialization in early childhood education. Further, revision in certification procedures have been proposed by the Association of Early Childhood Education of Ontario. However it is rumored that some staff members in some day care centres (with the exception of the director) have very little formal training or experience related to the care and education of young children. It may be that more attention is given to achieving the regulated staff-child ratios (in centres) than to the specific training of staff members. However, since the principle costs in day care centres are in salaries,[13] it may be difficult to convince operators of centres to recruit staff likely to command, because of qualifications, a larger salary than some present staff members receive.

Private agencies or organizations such as Mothercraft are likely to employ generally well qualified staff. For example, the Mini-Skools organization brochures make a point of identifying staff preparation/ training in early childhood education and care. Mini-Skools operates

several centres in Metropolitan Toronto (and throughout Canada) and demonstrates concern for a high level of "custodial" care. Further, Mini-Skools brochures outline program objectives which show concern, as well, for cognitive and social development. Children from infancy through age of school entry are enrolled in this program. As a rule, private programs/centres such as Mothercraft and Mini-Skools provide a more comprehensive program of care/education than many other day care facilities. Part of the reason for this difference relates to funds available. These private programs are, of course, costly for parents. Nevertheless, there is often a "waiting list" of children for available spaces.

Regardless of the provincial and national growth in day care services, some argue that these services are inadequate and, as yet, do not reach all the people who need them. When the subsidizing of day care is examined, it appears, as Burshtyn notes, that day care services in Canada, to date, have been geared to a "problem" population.[14] This problem of population consists of those in economic need, with respect to obtaining child care, such as the working parent who is the sole support of the family. However, as Burshtyn observes, there is also a need for day care services among middle class, intact families with working mothers (i.e., the kind of family patronizing such private programs as Mothercraft and Mini Skools).[15] In keeping with this observation, it is suggested by Burshtyn and Krashinsky that some of the day care "need" is the need for supplemental day care.

Supplemental day care needs are described, generally, as the need for some "temporary" day care services on an emergency basis or as the need for some "supplemental" service on a continuing basis. Needs in the first category relate to those situations of family illness or other crisis wherein supervised care is required, for a period of time, for an infant

or young child. Needs in the second category relate to situations wherein there are periods of time in which young children have no supervision - usually the hours between the end of the school day and the time when parents arrive home from work. When we think of supplemental care in terms of the school aged child, it may be worthwhile investigating the extent to which this care could be provided by the staff and facilities of the school. This question will be explored more fully later in this report.

At this point, it seems appropriate to conclude this overview of day care programs and policies in Ontario with listing what Ministry consultants (Day Nurseries Branch, Ministry of Community and Social Services) see as included among the day care needs of the province.

1) day care counselling or a registry in large cities to assist parents in locating vacancies in day care centres
2) half day programs for high risk or deprived children and their parents
3) appropriate program for school age children in out of school hours
4) supervision and training of Private Home Day Care providers.

A fifth need mentioned in the literature and one to which these consultants would undoubtedly subscribe is the need for more parent and community involvement in providing and monitoring day care services. Certainly the needs of high risk children and the needs for supplemental day care, mentioned by the consultants, suggest areas of need to which schools might be able to make a contribution.

Kindergarten - Aspects of Practice/Suggestions of Need

In Ontario, school attendance is not compulsory until the age of 6. Therefore, boards of education are not required to provide kindergarten classes. However the great majority of boards do provide such classes for 5 year olds (Senior Kindergarten). A smaller number of boards also provide kindergarten programs for 4 year olds (Junior Kindergarten). September 1977 enrollment reports indicate the following distribution of kindergarten enrollments.*

	Public Board	Separate Board	Combined
Junior Kindergarten	21,277	20,579	41,856
Senior Kindergarten	92,023	36,868	128,891

In order to obtain information concerning different dimensions of present kindergarten practice, and any proposed changes in practice, a questionnaire was sent to school boards in the province. This Early Childhood Education questionnaire was one of several included in the package of instruments sent to 193 boards by the Curriculum Task Force. The return on the instrument package was a little less that 50% with 87 responses to the Early Childhood instrument. It should be noted that the total number of boards polled included some with zero population and some with special status (e.g., Service Base Schools, Hospital Schools and small one room Northern School Boards). Therefore when concern is with practice in most public and separate boards, the number of replies (87) is deemed sufficient to suggest practice trends. The

*Enrollment figures received from the Ministry of Education

Early Childhood Education questionnaire, including a summary of some of the data, is found in Appendix A. As noted in the summary of the data and in the discussion of results, not all questions in the questionnaire were answered by all respondents.

As indicated in the enrollment figures previously reported, over three times as many children attend Senior Kindergarten as attend Junior Kindergarten. Data from the Early Childhood Education questionnaire show that the number of Senior Kindergarten classes is almost three times as great as the numbers of Junior Kindergarten classes when the kindergarten classes of the reporting boards are combined. As suggested by these figures, the Senior Kindergarten is a more established feature of the elementary school program than is the Junior Kindergarten. Of course, kindergarten has been an approved part of the provincial educational system since 1885 when Ontario became the first province to take such a measure.[16] Junior kindergartens, on the other hand, have a shorter history. The concept and practice of Junior Kindergarten seem to have evolved from preschool enrichment classes which began in Ottawa in 1940 and then spread to Toronto. Logan and Logan imply that these classes were the result of the number of women employed in the work force during the Second World War and resulting concern for the welfare of their young children.[17] Most of these programs for 4 year olds appeared in inner city locations and it is not surprising that in recent years these Junior Kindergartens have been seen as providing for the needs of immigrant children - especially those for whom English is a second language. In order to identify some of the factors influencing

a board's decision to establish Junior Kindergartens, a question to this effect was included in the Early Childhood Education instrument. Boards having Junior Kindergartens responded to the question and the following identifies these factors, the number "checking" each factor and the ranking accorded to each when all responses to each factor were combined.

Factors Influencing Decision To Establish a Junior Kindergarten	Number "checking" factor	Rank Order
Belief that programs for 4 year olds should be a part of the schools primary level program	23	1.5
Belief that educational programs for 4 year olds are desirable and that the school can offer the best program for 4 year olds	23	1.5
Parent/community desire to establish a program for 4 year olds	21	3
Desire to intervene early in the education of children whose first language is not English	18	4.5
Desire to provide an opportunity for early identification of learning problems	18	4.5
Lack of private nursery or day care facilities in the community	11	6

An opportunity was provided for listing any other factors that influenced the decision to establish a Junior Kindergarten. Of the few responses obtained, most related to the desire to "intervene" early in the education of the low income child and/or second language learner.

In considering these data it must be remembered that only boards having Junior Kindergartens responded to this question. The responses to this question and others directed at Boards having both Junior and Senior Kindergartens indicates that only 23 of the 87 responding boards have both Junior and Senior Kindergartens. However in these boards, belief in the value of preschool education and in the school's ability to provide the "best program for 4 year olds" seem to have been major influences on the decision to establish Junior Kindergartens. Obviously the concern for identifying and attending to the special needs of certain children are also factors influencing the establishment of kindergarten programs for 4 year olds. However it appears that since the institution of the preschool enrichment classes in the 1940's, programs for 4 year olds have been seen, increasingly, as valuable for all children not only those with some "special" problem or need.

When schools provide kindergartens for both 4 and 5 year olds, one of the important curriculum questions relates to the extent to which the two programs are conceptually and operationally different. This is an important question as indistinguishable programs (i.e., two years of the same thing) would be difficult to justify in terms of contributing to the child's education. To obtain some description of program differences, one item on the Early Childhood Education questionnaire asked Boards having both Junior and Senior Kindergartens to "describe, briefly, what distinguishes between the programs in JK and SK in your board's jurisdiction."*

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* Questionnaire used abbreviation SK (Senior Kindergarten) and JK (Junior Kindergarten)

The descriptions provided by 18 of the 23 responding boards were very similar. Junior kindergartens are seen as emphasizing social/emotional development and as being highly "play" oriented. Senior Kindergartens are seen as introducing the "academic" by way of readiness programs/activities which focus on the development of specific skills - especially those involved in reading. The terms "structured" and "unstructured" are also used in describing differences between the programs for 4 and 5 year olds. Senior kindergarten programs are described as having more "structure" which implies more teacher direction and more goal oriented activities. However there is no suggestion that the total program becomes teacher directed. Rather the implication is that children are introduced to formal learning activities which they will encounter in grade one. Junior kindergarten programs are described as "less structured" with emphasis on encouraging/supporting "informal" interaction with the teacher and peers. Both Junior and Senior kindergarten programs are described as having a concern with language development. Several descriptions suggest that this concern becomes more formalized in Senior kindergarten with the introduction of readiness materials. One board reported no "real difference" between programs and a few suggested that the Senior kindergarten was, in effect, a continuation of Junior kindergarten. In these latter instances, the implication seems to be that the socialization, provisions for "language development", etc. found in the 4 year old kindergarten are continued and refined in the kindergarten for 5 year olds.

The program distinctions described by most of the responding boards suggests the nursery-kindergarten "differences" identified and described in Section I. Descriptions of programs for 4 year olds appear to have more of a nursery orientation whereas programs for 5 year olds appear to have a more traditional kindergarten orientation. Logan and Logan state that the Froebelian influence has been strong in the development of kindergarten education in Canada, though they dispute the extent to which Froebel's intent has been correctly interpreted in practice.[18 & 19] Nevertheless the Senior kindergarten program's concern with providing some specific preparation for the school's academic program is reminiscent of the Froebel notion that the kindergarten program must make some provisions to meet its obligations to society - in this instance the expectation that kindergarten prepares the child for later learning. Junior kindergarten programs, as previously noted, appear to have more of a nursery orientation. Concern with the child's social and emotional development - a traditional nursery concern - is evident in the program descriptions. Whereas the 4 year old kindergartens in many schools may not need to be as concerned as the original British nurseries with the child's "physical health", certainly the nursery "mental health" concern is evident in programs described as being concerned with the child's "creativity", "socialization" and development of "self image".

In addition to providing some descriptions of kindergarten programs, boards were asked to provide some general information related to staffing. The following illustrates the distribution of kindergarten teaching staff in the 87 boards responding to the questionnaire.

Number of teachers teaching Senior Kindergarten only	1764
Number of teachers teaching Junior Kindergarten only	618
Number of teachers teaching both Junior and Senior Kindergarten	391
Total number of Kindergarten teachers in Responding Boards	2773

As can be seen in this distribution, only a small proportion of the teachers have responsibilities for both the 4 and 5 year old programs. This suggests that in most instances both the 5 year old and 4 year old programs involve two half day sessions - each session accommodating a different group of children.

Questions concerning teacher certification reveal that few kindergarten teachers have the Primary Specialists Certificate in addition to the Elementary Teachers Certificate. This is true for both Senior and Junior Kindergarten teachers as the following distribution illustrates.

	Junior Kindergarten	Senior Kindergarten
Number of teachers with an Elementary School Teachers Certificate	685	1783
Number of teachers with a Primary Specialists Certificate	138	250
Number of teachers with both an Elementary School Teachers Certificate and a Primary Specialists Certificate	62	197

As can be seen, the proportion of Junior Kindergarten teachers having the Primary Specialists Certificate is higher than the proportion of

Senior Kindergarten teachers holding this certification. Although it is likely that teachers in both groups have participated in inservice meetings/workshops geared to their interests as teachers of young children, the data suggest that much of the professional preparation of the majority of kindergarten teachers parallels that of other elementary teachers.

Questions concerning the extent to which teacher aides are available to teachers show that both Junior and Senior kindergarten teachers are more likely to have a "full time" aide than a "part time" aide. However the number of kindergarten teachers having any assistance from a teacher aide is small as the following distribution shows.

	Junior Kindergarten	Senior Kindergarten
Number having a "full time" teachers aide	66	114
Number having a "part time" teachers aide	48	111

Inspection of the data also shows that relatively few boards employ teacher aides to assist in the kindergarten. Thus the number of teacher aides identified are concentrated in a few boards.

In summary, the pattern of kindergarten staffing in the 87 boards is one in which the teacher tends to be responsible for either the Senior Kindergarten or the Junior Kindergarten. The proportion of teachers having responsibilities for both programs is relatively small. Further the majority of kindergarten teachers do not hold the Primary Specialists

Certificate, though a Junior Kindergarten teacher is more likely to hold the certification than is a Senior Kindergarten teacher. Most kindergarten teachers do not have the assistance of a teacher's aide although many teachers in a few boards appear to have this assistance. If a teacher does have an aide, the aide is likely to be "full" rather than "part" time.

In addition to details pertaining to school operated programs for 4 and 5 year olds, boards were asked, "Is any individual or group now operating any kind of program, in any of your schools, for children under 4?" Where any programs were operating, a brief description was requested. Twenty-nine boards indicated that some kind of program for children under 4 was operating in a school or schools in their board's jurisdiction. In some boards a number of different preschool programs/services seem to be available. Cooperative Day Care or Nursery programs staffed by parents and located in "unused" school space are the kinds of programs mentioned most frequently. Montessori nursery programs and programs associated with other private agencies (e.g. YMCA, Lambeth Cooperative Playschool) are also mentioned as operating in "rented" school space. A program sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Recreation was also mentioned by one board. Other programs identified as board sponsored programs include those for handicapped children (e.g. retarded, hard of hearing), and those focusing on the teaching/learning of French.

From the descriptive information provided, several programs

involve parents as either "teachers" or participants in the program. One board, for example, describes a "Drop In Centre" for parents and young children "Where parents and young children can come to share in fun and education". Also described is a French Immersion program for 2-4 year olds and their mothers - a program involving "dialogue and songs". Although some programs apparently operate on a daily basis, several are described as operating only a day or two a week.

Some of the more interesting aspects of these findings are the variety of programs in operation and the extent of parent involvement in different programs. Parent cooperative programs are evidence of parent interest in providing their children with some kind of group experience outside of the home. The encouragement of parent participation in other kinds of programs (e.g. French Immersion), shows concern for involving parents with their children in learning activities. Both situations respond to an early childhood education concern related to increasing parent interest and involvement in the "outside the house" education of their young children.

The number of groups and agencies sponsoring programs for young children (and renting school space for their programs) is an indication of the demand for early childhood programs for children under 4. That schools are housing these programs in apparently increasing numbers suggests a broader role for the school in accommodating to community educational needs. Although boards are not operating all of these programs, schools seem to be "opening up" to admit programs directed by other community groups and agencies.

The majority of the questions in the Early Childhood Education questionnaire were concerned with determining (1) if boards had plans for extending present early childhood programs/services and (2) the nature of any proposed extensions of program/service. Boards were asked, first, if there had been discussion of extending the half day Junior Kindergarten and/or half day Senior Kindergarten to a full day. Only 7 of the boards operating Junior Kindergartens responded that there had been discussion of extending the half day program to a full day program. Requested elaboration of these responses indicate that any proposal for extending the Junior Kindergarten program tended to continue in the "informal discussion" stage or else to have been abandoned. Reportedly one board has a full day Junior Kindergarten.

When asked about discussions concerned with extending the half day Senior kindergarten to a full day program, 28 boards said "yes" such discussion had been held. Other responses to an open ended question suggest that in 11 of these 28 boards some full day Senior Kindergarten programs are operating at present. Among the reasons cited for establishing full day classes are the distance involved in transporting children to school, and interest in second language learning. With respect to problems of transporting young children for half day sessions, some boards have found that it is better to transport children for a full day on alternate days. With this arrangement, the bus riding time per week is reduced. A few boards seem to have had such "full day" arrangements for several years. Other boards state that the full day program can provide time for more second language learning and practice.

(e.g., half day French Immersion). Although only eleven boards reported having full day Senior Kindergarten classes at present, responses suggest that several schools in some boards have full day Senior Kindergartens.

Other responses to the question of extending the half day Senior Kindergarten programs for a full day indicate that some boards have considered this change but have abandoned the idea at this time. In other boards discussion of such a proposal is continuing on an informal basis. Although there seems to have been more discussion of extending the Senior Kindergarten program to a full day than of similarly extending the Junior Kindergarten program, the majority of boards seem not to have considered such extensions at all.

The care/education of 3 year olds has not been a traditional concern or responsibility of the school. However, boards were asked to indicate if "the teaching staff, administration and community support, in principle, establishing care/education programs for 3 year olds in any schools in (the) Board's jurisdiction". Of the 67 boards responding to the question, 24 indicated "yes", 43 indicated "no". In other words a little over half of the boards responding to the question indicate that teachers, administrators and the community accept, in principle, school board programs for 3 year olds. However when asked if their boards had the capability for supporting programs for 3 year olds at this time, approximately 60% of the boards responding replied "no". The specific question asked referred to the extent to which the

"competence of present teaching staff and existing school plant/ facilities" resulted in the capability of supporting both half day and full day programs for 3 year olds. The number (22) of boards indicating the capability to support a half day program was greater than the number (13) indicating the capability to support a full day program. Nevertheless the response to questions pertaining to both programs was overwhelmingly negative.

Boards were asked also to identify the major stumbling blocks "if there is support in principle for extending the educational program to 3 year olds, but a lack of capabiiity for creating such a program". The intent of the question was to identify factors standing in the way of establishing programs for 3 year olds when there was both school and community support for such programs. Responses to the question were of two types. Most responses did address the question asked but several identified, in effect, why there was not support, in principle, for programs for 3 year olds. Although the latter question was not posed by the questionnaire, the responses to the "unposed" question are interesting and deserving of mention.

"Parent objections" and lack of community support were listed as reasons why programs for 3 year olds have not been considered by some boards. Interestingly, the same reasons were also listed to explain why Junior kindergartens had not been established in a few boards. The following description of school trustee reactions to the introduction of Junior Kindergarten seems to summarize the main objections to school programs for 3 and 4 year olds. Reportedly the objections are

"overinstitutionalization of young children", "not enough parent contact as it is", "why should public education provide baby sitting service". The suggestion in many responses was that cost was one of the factors behind lack of support for programs for 3 and 4 year olds. However, there was also the implication in many responses that, regardless of cost, institutionalized educational programs for 3 and 4 year olds may not be desirable. This attitude seemed to be influenced in one board by the belief that school involvement in the education of 3 year olds would not find "acceptance" by other groups in the community sponsoring programs for 3 year olds.

For boards in which the spirit is willing but the capability lacking, the major stumbling blocks to establishing programs for 3 year olds are listed as costs, transportation problems, lack of space, and lack of trained personnel. Perhaps all problems could be listed under "costs", "funding", or "budget", but elaboration in some responses suggested particular costs for materials and equipment. Certainly one of the major problems presently experienced by some boards in operating their kindergarten program is the problem of busing young children. Boards are understandably reluctant to have young children spend extended periods riding the bus to and from school. In some boards, the establishment of full day kindergartens is apparently related to reducing the time per week that young children spend on buses. Thus it is not surprising that transporting children to and from school would be an impediment to establishing programs for 3 year olds. Further all 3 year olds would need to be transported by some means to any school

operated program. It was a bit surprising to note that lack of space is seen as a problem in relation to establishing programs for 3 year olds in some board jurisdictions. However, it appears that in some boards, lack of space or crowding is experienced in some schools but not in others. Given the number of boards reporting programs/services using school facilities, but sponsored by other community groups/ agencies, it may be that such programs/services have "absorbed" some of the excess school space reportedly resulting from declining school enrollments. Not surprisingly, perhaps, is the belief that a lack of trained personnel constitutes a stumbling block to board sponsored programs for 3 year olds. Traditionally, the training of most nursery teachers, and therefore most teachers of 3 year olds, has had a somewhat different focus than the training of elementary school teachers who choose to teach in the kindergarten and primary grades. Thus some kindergarten teachers might feel, or be perceived as being, deficient in the knowledge/skills required to provide an appropriate program for 3 year olds. This attitude is understandable in spite of the fact that the training of nursery and elementary teachers in recent years has had similar emphases - particularly in the shared concern for the teacher's familiarity with significant theories of child development and learning. However, regardless of this fact and the suggestion that the Junior kindergarten program has some similarity to the nursery program, it must be remembered that in terms of growth and development, the 3 year old differs markedly from the 4 year old. Thus the concern for trained personnel is a valid one when any thought is given to school

programs for 3 year olds. In relation to this question of school programs for 3 year olds, and in the context of declining enrollment, the comments of one board deserve particular mention. These comments pertain to the suggestion that secondary schools house programs for 3 year olds and 4 year olds (Junior Kindergarten) with these requirements

> "(1) Parents must volunteer one day each week or two
>
> (2) Secondary school students be programmed via Family Studies or Physical Education to 3 year old classes"

With respect to point (2) the suggestion is made that the experience with the young children be integrated with learning via such topic areas as Parenting and Child Development.

In terms of the data collected in the Early Childhood Education questionnaire, it is accurate to say that, in the sample of boards responding, there is no great enthusiasm for extending the school's program to 3 year olds. Further there is an indication of many problems standing in the way of any such extension of program. Whereas some problems could probably be solved by providing boards with more money for early childhood programs, it is not certain that money would solve all problems. The major problem associated with transporting 3 year olds to preschool programs is one of "child welfare" not only money. The major concern is the time that young children should spend on a bus, although there is, of course, the question of the cost of providing adequate supervision when children are being transported to and from school. Another problem not necessarily associated with cost of program is the attitude that "cradle to the grave" formal education should

not be encouraged. Some see an extension of the school's program to the 3 year olds as moving closer to the "cradle" and question the need and/or right of public education to move in this direction.

Predicting that cost would be identified as a factor in extending the school program to 3 year olds, and assuming that it would be identified as a factor in any extension of program, boards were asked to indicate the kinds of programs that could be accommodated at a minimum of additional costs. The specific request was to identify in a list of program options, the ones which could be accommodated at minimum cost "given the competence of present teaching staff, the existing physical plants/facilities and the needs of the community serviced by the Board." The following lists the program options and the resulting ranking of options when all the responses from boards are combined.

Program Option	Rank
Full day Senior Kindergarten	1
Full day Junior Kindergarten	2
Supplementary day care for children attending half day kindergarten sessions	4
Half day nursery programs for 3 year olds	5
Full day nursery/day care for 3 year olds	6
Half day language oriented program for non English speaking 3 year olds	3

These rankings indicate that in terms of costs and present staff/facilities, extending the Senior Kindergarten day is seen as more feasible than extending the Junior Kindergarten day. In fact 43% of

the responding boards indicated full day Senior Kindergarten as an option whereas only 28% indicate full day Junior Kindergarten. When these rankings and percentages are compared to other responses to the questionnaire, it can be seen that there is also more interest in and support for extending the Senior Kindergarten day than there is for extending the Junior Kindergarten day. Belief in a board's ability to mount and support a program is undoubtedly an influence on the "interest" in such a program. Apparently most boards believe that in terms of extending early childhood programs/services, they are best equipped to extend what has been the traditional school based early childhood program - kindergarten for 5 year olds. However, given response to other questions, it appears that "preference" as well as "feasibility" may have served as a criterion for response here.

In terms of costs, present staff, facilities and community needs, programs for 3 year old non English speakers and, to a lesser extent, supplemental day care for kindergarteners are viewed as more feasible than nursery programs for 3 year olds. The following identifies the percentage of affirmative responses to each of these program options.

Supplementary day care for children attending half day kindergarten sessions	18.4%
Half day nursery program for 3 year olds	17.2%
Full day nursery/day care for 3 year olds	13.8%
Half day language oriented programs for non English speaking 3 year olds	21.8%

Whereas present staff and facilities, in particular, might be viewed as more attuned to the 4 and 5 year old (supplemental day care) it is difficult to suggest why programs for non English speaking 3 year olds would be more feasible than nursery programs for 3 year olds. As noted previously, it appears that the rank ordering of program options may be a rank ordering determined by preferences as well as perceived feasibility.

Certainly in terms of extending the school's early childhood programs/services, extending the Senior Kindergarten program to a full day program is the only change or extension which enjoys the interest and support of a significant number of the boards responding to the questionnaire. This claim is supported by responses to different questions found in the instrument. Although it might be argued that lack of funds dampens enthusiasm for other program options, there are, as noted previously, indications that some school personnel are not sure that the school should extend its involvement in early education. There appear to be both philosophical and political overtones related to this uncertainty.

The data presented and discussed in the past several pages show that a high percentage of 5 year olds in the province are attending kindergarten programs. Fewer 4 year olds are attending kindergarten, but their numbers reveal, nevertheless, that schools have become engaged to quite an extent in the education of children under 5. Descriptions of kindergarten programs show that Junior and Senior kindergarten programs, in most boards, can be distinguished in terms

of some variation in purpose and teaching method. Thus it appears that schools, and particularly teaching staff, have demonstrated the ability/competence to develop and operate programs for 4 year olds - programs which are not pale imitations of the program for 5 year olds, but which are designed to meet specific needs of 4 year olds. The data also reveal continuing concern for young children with problems which are likely to affect success in school. However, other than a possible extention of the Senior kindergarten day, boards do not appear to be anxious to extend present early childhood programs. Undoubtedly lack of funds for any program extension is one factor responsible for this attitude. However, some boards imply as well some reservation as to the appropriateness of any increased involvement in the education/care of young children.

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14) Burshtyn, p. 66.

15) Burshtyn, p. 64 - quoting F. Ruderman and Child Welfare League Study.

16) Logan, L. M. and Logan, V. G. Educating Young Children. McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1974. pp.14-15.

17) Logan and Logan, p. 5.

18) Logan and Logan, p. 14.

19) Logan and Logan, p. 8.

SECTION IV

Recommendations

As stated in the Introduction, this report is concerned with examining the feasibility and desirability of extending the role of the school, and other educational institutions, in the area of early childhood education and care. The context for this examination is declining enrolments in Ontario schools. The conclusions resulting from this examination are found in recommendations which provide the substance for this concluding section of the report.

Several pages of this report are devoted to identifying issues and needs pertaining to early childhood care/education in general and in Ontario in particular. The theoretical and research literature of the field, as well as data descriptive of present practice, are used to identify/describe these issues and needs, and to suggest how schools might respond to certain needs and, possibly, participate in the resolution of certain issues. The recommendations found on the following pages represent an attempt to make explicit the suggestions contained in the previous sections. Further these recommendations concern themselves with proposals which have specific and direct relevance to the conditions in the educational community resulting from declining enrolments.

Extending the Kindergarten Program

A persistent issue in early childhood education relates to both program content and teaching method. Further much of the evidence pertaining to the effects of early education programs are too inconclusive to decide the issue. However, there is some evidence of positive

short term (and, in a few instances, long term) effects of what have been called cognitively oriented programs. Most of the findings relate to positive effects of these programs for disadvantaged children. Although the research speaks to "cognitively oriented programs" and "disadvantaged" children, examination of the programs and the children involved suggests that for most children identified as "high risk", a program planned to focus on specific objectives has the potential for achieving positive effects. Further there is some reason to believe that effects of specific and planned interventions in programs for 4 and 5 year olds will persist during the years when children are learning the tools or basic skills.

In the Ontario context these findings suggest a direction for meeting the concern expressed for high risk children. Specifically this direction can be described as supplementing the present kindergarten program for these children with additional program components focusing on specific learning needs. In order to modify kindergarten programs for these children without sacrificing worthwhile dimensions of present programs, an extension of the school day is required. Some might argue that the solution for the high risk child is to omit what might be called the enrichment features of present programs and to concentrate only on special academically related needs. It is argued here that the high risk child needs something in addition to, rather than in lieu of, the present program. Hence the recommendation of a full day program.

However, there does not appear to be overwhelming support among boards of education for extending the school day. Although it is likely that full day programs are opposed by some on philosophical grounds,

it is also likely that problems of funding, facilities and staffing account for much of the reluctance to inaugurate all day kindergartens. It is with this belief, and in the context of the research identified, that the following recommendations are made.

I. That full day Senior Kindergartens for 5 year olds be established in those schools which can demonstrate that both the characteristics of the school population and the staff and facilities of the school make a full day program feasible and desirable.

II. That full day Senior Kindergartens which are established be founded on a curriculum program which specifies how the full day program accommodates the specific learning needs of the children involved and how the program effects are to be evaluated.

III. That Faculties of Education* and Ministry of Education personnel be involved, with kindergarten teachers and consultants, in designing the curriculum programs which are geared to specific needs of children involved and adapted to the longer school day.

IV. That Faculties of Education develop and conduct inservice courses which can assist kindergarten teachers and school supervisory staff in implementing programs designed for a full day kindergarten.

V. That the Ministry of Education support and supervise research which focuses on <u>systematic</u> study and evaluation of full day kindergarten programs for 5 year olds - particularly the effects of different curricula.

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*Faculties of Education refer to graduate faculties such as OISE, as well as to faculties concerned with undergraduate studies primarily.

VI. That the Ministry of Education initiate and supervise a longitudinal study of the effects on school progress and attitude toward school of half day and full day Senior and Junior Kindergarten programs on children with different characteristics.

Obviously most if not all of these recommendations are interrelated. However, it is difficult to visualize how an extension of the kindergarten program could be planned, developed, supported and evaluated without the participation of all the agencies identified. Although the recommendations involve various segments of the educational community, it should be recognized that the recommendations are conservative in the sense that full day kindergarten programs are recommended only for those schools which can demonstrate that such a program is needed. The results of the Early Childhood Education questionnaire reveal that many Senior Kindergarten programs are at the present time concerned with cognitively oriented activities as a preparation for later school learning. However, it is likely that for some children these emphases within a half day program are not sufficient. In fact for many children who have had nursery and/or Junior Kindergarten experience, it may be argued that a half day of Senior Kindergarten is not adequate to their needs.

Certainly observation of present practice as well as some research findings suggest that full day kindergarten for all 5 year olds are worth investigating. However, school board response to the question of the extended day and present economic constraints in education suggest that, at this time, any recommendation for extending the

kindergarten day should be limited to programs for high risk children. All of these concerns and questions illustrate why the recommendations for research by the Ministry of Education are so critical.

Providing Supplemental Day Care

There is much evidence pointing to the demand for more day care for services for children below school age. There is also evidence of a need for "out of school hours" care and supervision for many school aged children. It is the need of these latter groups of children to which the recommendations of this report are directed. This decision does not deny the desirability of improving the amount and quality of day care for children below school age. However, at this time, it appears that any contribution to improved day care that can be made by schools and associated educational agencies, resides in the area of supplemental day care for school aged children. Further it is in the belief that the school's role in supplemental day care at this time should be an object of study, rather than of immediate action, that the following recommendations are made.

VII. That the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Community and Social Service cooperate in research directed at determining the following:

(1) the number of kindergarten children who are also enrolled in a half day day care program;

(2) the extent of the need for "out of school hours" care/ supervision for primary and junior grade children whose

parents guardians cannot provide this care/supervision personally, in the hours between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

(3) the facilities/staff/program requirements for providing supplemental day care in schools for primary and junior grade children.

VIII. That the findings of this research (Recommendation VII), be used as a basis for any policy recommendations which delineate the school's role in providing supplemental day care and establish requirements for instituting supplemental day care programs in schools.

Certainly there is widespread concern for the "latch key"* child and for finding day care for the child who is only at school for half a day. Further, schools would appear to possess facilities (e.g. library, gymnasium) and the human resources (e.g. teachers with special skills/talents) to support a program of enriched day care for primary and junior grade children. Athletic programs, opportunities for participation in music, art, drama activities, crafts and special hobby groups are among the activities which could conceivably make up an enriched supplemental day care program. However, to provide such a program in addition to the regular school program would be likely to require scheduling accommodations vis a vis the use of various facilities, some redeployment of staff and some significant change in hours of the working day for both professional and support

*Term used in literature and elsewhere to describe child who goes home after school, "lets himself in the house", and cares for himself until parents come home from work.

staff. Thus, before urging schools to involve themselves in day care, and providing them with the funds for such service, it makes more sense to have the need for and feasibility of school operated day care studied and evaluated by the Ministries directly concerned with the care and education of young children. Should it then be recommended that schools develop supplementary day care programs, Ministry of Education personnel, Faculties of Education and school staff would all have a role to play in developing appropriate programs.

Providing Assistance to Parents

The recommendations which follow are difficult to relate to any one specific discussion found earlier in the report. This is because the base of the recommendations is scattered throughout the text and the pieces only come together after some reflection. Some of these "pieces" are the suggested potential of some infant education programs, observations of a program for 2-1/2 year olds, the fact that parent cooperative play group and day care programs are so popular, the repeated literature references to the parents' role in early education, and the appeal which books/lectures on "parenting" seem to have for parents. Although many elementary teachers, through parent-teacher conferences, encourage and enlist parent involvement in the education process, it is likely that the educational community has not taken full advantage of the opportunity to advise and assist the parents of the preschool child. It is with the belief that educators have a contribution to make in this area that the following recommendations are made.

IX. That Faculties of Education and Community College staff design and conduct mini-courses and workshops for parents who are involved in the planning/supervising of programs for play groups or cooperative day care or nursery groups.

X. That Faculties of Education and Community College staff explore the potential of video tape and film in acquainting parents with suggested approaches to encouraging and supporting language development in young children.

XI. That Faculties of Education and Ministry of Education personnel develop and evaluate curriculum materials appropriate for use with secondary school students interested in the care and education of young children.

Members of Faculties of Education and Community College staff who have trained teachers of young children are in a position to offer assistance to parents working in cooperative nurseries, and to parents interested in learning more about how they can contribute to their child's development learning. Further the research literature contains descriptions of methods and materials used to involve parents in interacting with their children for different purposes. Certainly current courses and seminars used in teacher education would need to be modified and revised for the purposes of parent education, and of acquainting high school students with various aspects of child growth and development. However, a literature in adult education as well as ones in curriculum and early childhood education should assist in the development of appropriate current offerings.

Conclusion

Within the educational community, the problems resulting from declining enrolments and the demands for early childhood care/education might appear, at first glance, to have the potential for "cancelling out" each other - at least in elementary education. However, neither educational problems nor educational demands are ever so easily solved or satisfied. Certainly one problem associated with extending and maintaining school programs and services is obtaining the necessary funds and, in 1978, this is a particular problem in education. In the case of supporting an extension of the school's involvement in early care/education, there is also the question, in 1978, of having sufficient knowledge (i.e. evidence) to warrant sweeping change. The recommendations in this report attempt to show cognizance of both of these factors. Study of the recommendations should reveal that the conditions resulting from declining enrolments are seen as providing an opportunity for the kind of limited action and needed research which should give direction to the complex task of determining how the educational community can best serve the education/care needs of young children in the province.

Appendix A

INSTRUMENT II

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

PREAMBLE

In addition to responses to this instrument, the Curriculum Task Force is interested in any Early Childhood Brief that a Board might wish to submit. Any such Brief should include specific proposals describing how a Board would organize and finance any extension of present programs.

This section of the questionnaire is concerned with obtaining:

1) information relative to present kindergarten programs

2) opinions concerning the desirability and means of extending/expanding school program offerings for 3, 4, and 5 year olds.

Throughout this section the letters SK will refer to Senior Kindergarten; the letters JK will refer to Junior Kindergarten.

NAME OF RESPONDENT _____

POSITION _____

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CARD 1

1. Each part of this question is to answered by indicating a number OR the designation, N/A. The designation N/A (non-applicable) applies when the Board has no JK and/or teacher aides working in kindergartens.

No. cases responding	Please indicate for your Board	% of 87 cases responding	
75	66217 the total enrollment in all SK classes	86.2	8-11
37	27749 the total enrollment in all JK classes	42.5	13-16
69	2734 the number of SK classes	79.3	18-20
35	1004 the number of JK classes	40.3	22-24
70	1764 the number of teachers teaching SK only	80.5	26-28
33	618 the number of teachers teaching JK only	38.0	30-32
32	391 the number of teachers teaching both JK and SK	36.8	34-36
72	1783 the number of SK teachers with an Elementary School Teachers Certificate	82.8	38-40
36	250 the number of SK teachers with a Primary Specialists Certificate	41.4	42-44
34	197 the number of SK teachers with both an Elementary School Teachers Certificate and a Primary Specialists Certificate	39.1	46-48
34	685 the number of JK teachers with an Elementary School Teachers Certificate	39.1	50-52
12	138 the number of JK teachers with a Primary Specialists Certificate	13.6	54-56
15	62 the number of JK teachers with both an Elementary School Teachers Certificate and a Primary Specialists Certificate	17.2	58-60

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CARD 1

No. cases responding			% of 87 cases responding	
19	114	the number of SK having a "full time" teacher's aide	21.9	62-64
25	111	the number of SK having a "part time" teacher's aide	28.8	66-68
9	66	the number of JK having a "full time" teacher's aide	10.3	70-72
11	48	the number of JK having a "part time" teacher's aide	12.6	74-76

Questions 2, 3 and 4 are to be answered by Boards having both Junior and Senior Kindergartens. For Boards having only Senior Kindergartens move to question 5.

CARD 2

2. What factor(s) influenced the desire to establish Junior kindergartens in your Board's jurisdiction? (Check as many as appropriate.)

87 cases No. of responses	Rank		
21	3	parent/community desire to establish a program for 4 year olds	10
11	6	lack of private nursery or day care facilities in the community	11
18	4.5	desire to intervene early in the education of children where first language is not English	12
18	4.5	desire to provide an opportunity for early identification of learning problems	13
23	1.5	belief that programs for 4 year olds should be an integral part of the school's primary level program	14

No. cases responding		FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
23 1.5	belief that educational programs for 4 year olds are desirable and that the school can offer the best program for 4 year olds	15
---	other (Identify any additional factors in the space below)	16
		18
		19

3. Describe, briefly, what distinguishes between the programs in the JK and SK in your Board's jurisdiction. 21

Summary in the text of the paper.

4. Has there been discussion in your Board of extending the half day JK program to a full day? 23

7 YES 34 NO

If "yes" check the following statement which best describes the present state of affairs

No. of responses		
1	informal discussion with the staff is continuing	24
0	a group is working on a specific proposal for an all day JK	25
2	the idea has been abandoned	26
3	other (explain)	27
		28
		29
		30

Discussed in text of paper.

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5. Has there been discussion in your Board of extending the half-day SK to a full day?

28 YES 45 NO 32

If "yes" check the following statement which best describes the present state of affairs.

6 responses informal discussion with staff is continuing 33

3 responses a group is working on a specific proposal for an all day SK 34

6 responses the idea has been abandoned 35

_____ Other (explain) 36

37

38

39

6. Is any individual or group now operating any kind of program, in any of your schools, for children under 4?

29 YES 50 NO 41

If "yes" describe briefly. 42

Summary in text of paper.

7. Would the teaching staff, administrators and community support, in principle, establishing care/education programs for 3 year olds in any schools in your Board's jurisdiction?

24 YES 43 NO 44

8. Given the competencies of present teaching staff and existing school plants/facilities, does your Board have the capability of supporting:

a half day program for 3 year olds 22 YES 52 NO 46

a full day program for 3 year olds 13 YES 55 NO 47

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9. If there is support in principle, for extending the educational program to 3 year olds, but a lack of capability for mounting such a program in your Board, identify in the space below what are seen as the major stumbling blocks to mounting a program. 48

Summary in text of paper.

10. Given the competencies of present teaching staff, the existing physical plants/facilities AND the needs of the community serviced by the Board, indicate which of the following kinds of program could be accommodated by the Board with a minimum of additional costs. (Check as many as appropriate)

No. of responses		% of 87 cases responding	
37	full day SK	42.5	50
24	full day JK	27.6	51
16	supplementary day care for children attending half day kindergarten sessions	18.4	52
15	half day nursery program for 3 year olds	17.2	53
12	full day nursery/day care for 3 year olds	13.8	54
19	half day language oriented program for non English speaking 3 year olds	21.8	55